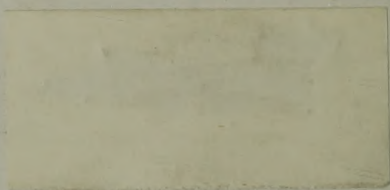
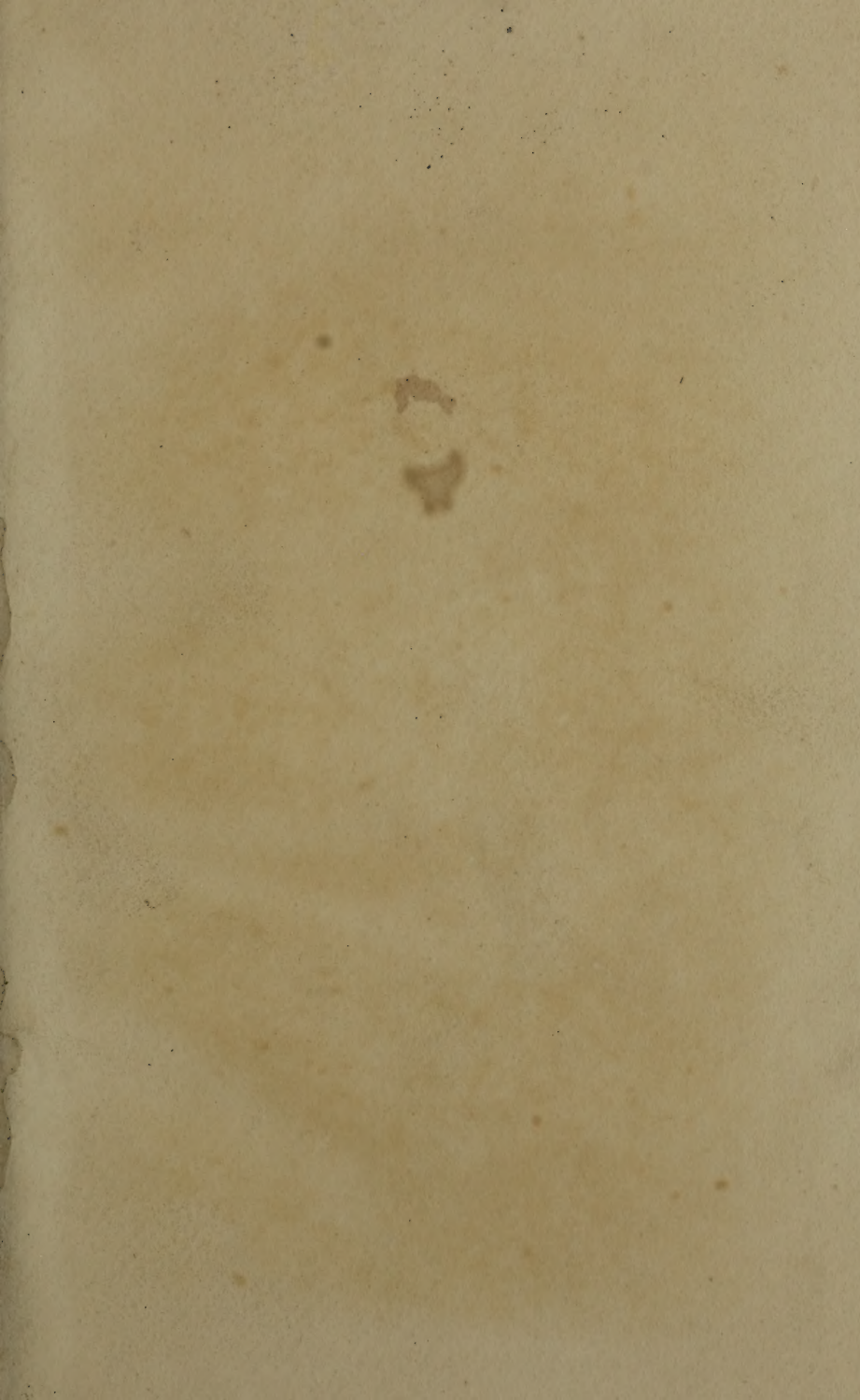


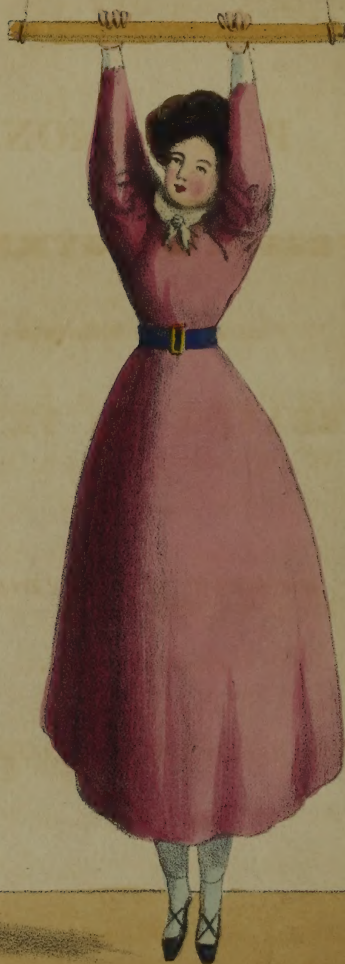
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p 25



SPINAL DEFORMITIES

Cured and Prevented

BY

P. G. HAMON,

PROFESSOR OF GYMNASTICS:

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED

A TREATISE ON FENCING,

AND ON

BODILY EXERCISES:

ILLUSTRATED WITH

EIGHT COLOURED ENGRAVINGS.

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SPINAL DEFORMITIES

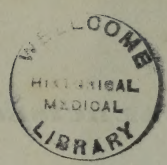
CHURCH AND HAYWARD

R. D. HAMON

PROFESSOR OF GYNAECISTICS

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A TREATISE ON FENCING



RIGHT COLOURED ENGRAVING

LONDON

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TO THE
NOBILITY AND GENTRY.

As a testimony of gratitude for the encouragement and support which he has for several years experienced at their hands, the following Work is respectfully inscribed,

BY THEIR OBEDIENT

AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

34, *North Audley Street,*
Grosvenor Square.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following little work is intended chiefly for the perusal of Parents, Guardians, and Principals of Schools. That the branch of Education of which it treats is deeply and seriously interesting will be readily admitted. It is hoped therefore that the information which it communicates, being the fruit of diligent observation and long experience, will at least secure to the subject a degree of attention more proportioned to its importance than it has hitherto received. With no other view than this has the author been induced to appear before the public in the character of a writer, and that at the expense of time which,

if pecuniary emolument were his object, he would have given to the numerous and urgent calls of his profession. But he saw that the public wanted information, and that which was wanted by a public, ever ready to afford the most liberal encouragement to real merit, he thought it would be ungrateful on his part to withhold. For, to what other cause than to the want of such a work can it be attributed, that in a country so pre-eminently distinguished as England is, for the anxious solicitude with which it watches over the intellectual and moral improvement of its Youth, their physical Education should in so many instances be either totally neglected, or blindly confided to mere pretenders. These persons announce themselves under the imposing title of *Professors*, and not unfrequently possess a considerable share of manual dexterity and bodily activity; but being totally ignorant of the principles which regulate and determine the just application

of the exercises they profess, they have been found frequently to *develop* and yet more frequently to *create* those very deformities of which they had undertaken the cure or the prevention. That this statement is free from exaggeration is but too unequivocally attested by the unavailing regret of many a credulous parent, and the bitter anguish of many an unhappy child reduced, by those *self-styled professors*, to a state of hopeless debility, for which the healing art affords neither cure nor alleviation.

ESSAY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

*Observations on the Exercises usually comprehended
under the name of Gymnastics.*

GYMNASTIC Exercises were first introduced into this country by Captain CLIAS, under the patronage of his late Royal Highness the Duke of YORK. For some time I was the partner of Captain CLIAS, but subsequently established a school, in which I taught these exercises on a system that enabled me to adapt them to the age, strength, and peculiar conformation of each pupil. The success of my method was so decisive, as not only to secure me the patronage of the Nobility, but to induce some of the most eminent medical practitioners to become my pupils.

Among those who attended the several courses of instruction, which constitute my system, there were certain foreigners, admitted without payment of the usual fees. These persons, unable to appreciate the discriminative application of the exercises, flattered themselves, that they had only to learn to perform them mechanically, and then become *professors*. They contented themselves therefore, with noting down what they heard relative to the names of the different exercises, and the manner of performing them, and little thinking that in a professor, the first and most important requisite is, that knowledge which prevents their misapplication, began to apply them without the slightest regard to difference of age, or sex, or physical strength. I had soon perceived the object of these gentlemen; but, as I supposed that the number of persons liable to be duped by them was inconsiderable, and that the public would soon form a proper estimate of their pretensions, I said nothing. In forming this opinion of the public discernment, I found that I had sadly miscalculated—that the number of persons imposed upon was far greater than I had imagined, but that the victims of

quackery, were most numerous in ladies' schools; the development of corporal deformities under the fostering care of these pretenders, some of whom had the assurance to call themselves my pupils, had in the course of a few years become so striking as to spread alarm among parents, and therefore to leave me no alternative, notwithstanding my previous determination, but to come before the public in vindication of the art which I profess.

It has been to me matter of much astonishment, that previously to engaging such persons to teach himself or his children, no one had thought of subjecting them to the examination of a medical man in these three essential points :—

1st. The nature of the exercises which the pupil was to perform.

2nd. What part of the frame was to be affected by them.

3rd. What must be the results produced.

Had such a course been pursued the medical man would soon have detected the ignorance of the *professor* by the blunders which must have marked his answers, and would thus have prevented the parent from sacrificing the health of the child,

and entailing on himself a lasting, but unavailing sorrow ; for it would be utterly impossible to give correct answers relative to any of those subjects, without so exact a knowledge of the muscles and their action, as those *professors*, with all their hardihood, do not even pretend to possess.

It is not at all surprising that among the pupils of such men some have been maimed or otherwise injured. This circumstance has alarmed the timid, and brought discredit on the exercises. But it is rather strange that it should not have once entered into the minds of persons so alarmed, that their misfortune was attributable, not to the exercises, but to the ignorance and presumption of those under whose direction the pupils had been placed. Many have been seriously injured by falling from their horses, but no one objects on that account, to the exercise of horsemanship : such an objection would be too absurd for any but idiots to utter ; yet, it would not be more absurd, than the notion that the Gymnastic Exercises can be injurious to the body. Physicians have been known at all times to recommend exercise for the preservation, or the restoration of health, but in

the use of it they have always strongly insisted on the necessity of moderation ; for he who does not know the effect of the different kinds of exercise, when reduced to a system capable of bringing all the muscles into vigorous action, will be apt, for fear of taking too little to take too much, and thus to produce evil where good had been intended: It is well known, however, that the intensity of every bodily exertion may be so reduced as to become supportable to the weakest and most delicate frame, or so increased as to afford within the limits of twenty minutes, sufficient exercise for the most robust and healthy. But a nice adaptation of the intensity of the exercise to the strength of the pupil is a thing not within the reach of a mere fencing master, or drill serjeant: it is the exclusive province of far higher art derived from an intimate knowledge of the constitution of the human frame, and regulated in its application by an enlightened experience. It is obvious, therefore, that the choice of a professor of Gymnastics is a matter of more serious moment than it is commonly considered ; for if rashly and injudiciously made it puts in peril the most valuable of earthly bless-

ings; while, if made with proper caution, it affords one of the greatest securities against bodily weakness and deformity. It would be easy to multiply arguments, and to cite authorities in proof of the great advantages to be derived from Gymnastic Exercises, performed under judicious direction. But nothing that I could adduce would more incontrovertibly establish the excellence of my method, than my daily increasing success—a success for which I hold myself indebted, not more to the unremitting assiduity of my attention to my pupils, and my unceasing endeavours to improve the art which I profess, than to the invaluable suggestions of some physicians of the first eminence in this metropolis, with whom I have long had the honour to live on terms of the most unreserved intimacy.

CHAPTER II.

On the number of Females afflicted with Deformities arising from Distortion of the Vertebral Column, and its different Causes.

THE reader will, perhaps, be astonished at the numerous instances of deformity arising from distortion of the spine, especially among English females, who, from the exquisite delicacy of their complexion, and the unrivalled beauty of their features, are commonly called by foreigners the *Georgians* of Europe. The following observations are nevertheless entitled to confidence; for they are the fruit of long and laborious inquiry. Having, some years since, applied myself to the discovery of the means of correcting those deformities, I thought it necessary, as a preliminary step, to ascertain as nearly as possible, the number of persons thus afflicted. Determined to conduct the enquiry with the most scrupulous exact-

ness, I commenced with children under the age of nine or ten years. These I found generally free from every defect of conformation. I next directed my attention to children between the ages of ten and fourteen. Among the children of this class, especially among the females, I observed that deformities were numerous. The absence of deformity observable among children of the first class, I could attribute to no other cause than to the unrestricted freedom of movement allowed them in consequence of their not being yet confined to severe or serious study and its prevalence among children of the second class, I felt myself compelled to ascribe to the opposite cause. I observed also, that the boys of this class were less generally affected with deformity than the girls; a circumstance which could be accounted for only by the exercises which the former are permitted to take during their hours of recreation. In these exercises, however, I would not be understood to include fencing, or these simplified Gymnastics, which I have with considerable success introduced into schools of the highest respectability. Pursuing my enquiries still further, I

observed that among females between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, deformities were yet more common. I concluded therefore that their physical education had been either totally neglected, or most injudiciously conducted. Indeed, it may be safely affirmed, that one in every twenty of the females of this class had her person distorted in a greater or less degree, nor was the distortion in any instance so inconsiderable as to escape the scrutiny of a practised eye, although much has been done to conceal such defects from the eye of an ordinary observer by the ingenuity of the dress-makers and staymakers. The latter, it may not be impertinent to remark, would add considerably to their claims on the gratitude of the fair sex, by diminishing the number and the volume of the hard substances of which stays are made.*

* The inventor of a simple corset or boddice, which would fit closely to the body without affecting its natural flexibility, would certainly deserve well of the public, and would no doubt be amply rewarded by the patronage of thousands of families who are anxious for some improvements in that article of dress. It has often occurred to me, in thinking on this subject, that so desirable an invention might be accomplished by the adoption of a material, combining with it that strength which would be requisite to

Many females have very erroneous notions of what is called a fine figure. They fancy, that in proportion as the waist is slender, they are to be considered well made, and therefore compress that part of the body so as to render its volume considerably less. Such compression cannot but impede the action of the organs of the stomach, and prove exceedingly injurious to the health. It is therefore scarcely to be supposed that the votaries of fashion would continue so fatal a practice, did they but reflect that the gracefulness of the waist

support the body, and elasticity that would leave the muscles perfect freedom of action. It would be necessary also, that the part of the corset which passes over the shoulders, should be made of an elastic stuff, possessing a capability of producing a re-action, so that without being put out of its place it could not impede or embarrass the movement of the shoulder-joint in raising the arm or in stretching it forward. I have thrown out these few hints, in the hope that they may lead to the supplying of a defect, very generally felt. by inducing the ingenious to turn their attention to the subject, and submit the fruit of their meditation to the judgment of the public. Indeed, I should be ready, among the numerous families whom I attend daily, to employ my utmost influence in favour of the individual who would produce such a corset or stays, as would not in any degree compress the muscles, nor cause them, by reducing them to a state of total inactivity, to lose that energy which they may have acquired by a course of gentle exercise; for such corset, or stays, is the only one that can afford the body, without debilitating its parts, that support which is necessary to maintain it in the proper position.

consists in its being round, erect, and duly proportioned to the rest of the body ; and not in its resembling a small pivot, so placed between the hips and the trunk, as to leave a ridiculous bend in the region of the loins.

Had this extensive and scrupulous inquiry left any doubt on my mind, that one of the principal causes of bodily deformity among young females, was the want of an exercise capable of giving to the muscles of the loins and the back the degree of vigour necessary to support the vertebral column in its erect position, it would have been removed by a little attention to the cases of children between the ages of ten and fifteen. Among these, we observe sometimes a decay of health, and sometimes too rapid a growth. In each case the muscles are found to be extremely weak, and it is scarcely necessary to remark that such children do not, for a long time, acquire their due portion of strength, unless the development of their muscular powers be assisted by the judicious application of a series of nicely graduated exercises. But, if they are kept to constant or hard labour, they want strength of loins sufficient to support the head, the trunk, and

the arms; their body inclines to one side or the other in order to relieve the loins from its weight, and in a little time deformity manifests itself in the elevation of one shoulder, which is an unequivocal symptom of distorsion in the vertebral column. For one bend having been produced in the vertebræ of the loins, another will inevitably take place in those of the back, so as to restore the equilibrium of the body; a circumstance which many are accustomed to attribute to awkwardness of habit, or perverseness of will, without once suspecting that it is the inevitable result of weakness.

It would be however the greatest imprudence to trust to exercise alone for the correction of all deformities of body. For, as the causes in which they originate are various, the modes of treating them must also be various. Let us suppose, for instance, that the deformity proceeds from an inflammation of the fibro cartilages or cariousness in the bones, which are cases of frequent occurrence, and may be easily recognised by a little attention to the patient who without being decidedly sick, is in that undefined but uncomfortable state of which he would communicate the idea to another

by saying that “he is *not at all well.*” In such cases it is clear that, if we began by the application of exercise, we should but increase the evil, and this fact alone is sufficient to shew that, when infants are afflicted with distortion of the spine it is indispensably necessary to submit their case to an experienced physician who, by examining the vertebræ and by observing the complexion, the colour of the lips, and the state of the pulse, will at once ascertain the cause to which the deformity is to be ascribed and the mode of treatment which should be followed.

From a conviction that bodily exercise was necessary to the health of their children, the majority of parents and principals of schools (for want of a better system,) had been long accustomed to place them under the care of a common soldier, styled a *Drill-master*. In order to exercise the children and give them what was considered a graceful carriage, the *Drill-master* used to keep them marching for a long time, with their bodies and arms placed like those of a grenadier in the ranks. Young ladies who had gone through this course of discipline, derived from it the enviable

advantage of being able to enter a drawing-room with the awkward stiffness of manner which the common soldier exhibits in presence of his superior. This system was too obviously absurd and ridiculous to take a lasting hold upon public approbation. Some of the masters therefore, in order to cast into the shade their less enterprising competitors, introduced what they deemed a great improvement of the old plan, by teaching young ladies to march with their hips and stomach thrown forward, and their shoulders and arms thrown as far back as possible. A necessary consequence of this was the projection of the head into a ridiculous position, which they endeavoured to correct by a still more ridiculous elevation of the nose and chin. The figure presented by the whole of the pupil's person (nearly resembling an S) is too frequently to be met with in our places of public resort, to render a more minute description necessary even to the most inattentive observer. There was one point however in which all the masters agreed, much as they differed in others. They seem to have been unanimous as to the propriety of compelling all the young ladies, big and little, to march together and

at the same pace. It is obvious that the lesser children must in this case have been obliged to strain the hips in order to take a stride sufficiently long to keep up with their more grown companions, and that the latter, as often as they had occasion to walk with a gentleman of tall stature, would change their natural gait for the long martial stride which they had practised under the auspices of the *Drill-master*.

Notwithstanding the ridiculousness of these practices they continued to spread far and wide, until the time when the goddess fashion, always capricious in her tastes, introduced those fooleries, known by the name of *calisthenics*. From that moment every one was eager to participate in the miraculous effects that were to be produced by these exercises, which were as dangerous to the health, as they were unsuited to the moral delicacy of a lady. At first their novelty caused them to work miracles, if not on the health, at least on the imagination of some respectable persons, who fancied they beheld that which never existed. This was sufficient to bring those exercises into high repute, and to furnish me with fresh occasion

for astonishment at the power which effrontery exercises over unsuspecting sincerity, and at the risks to which children are exposed by the tenderest affections of their parents. My astonishment was the greater, as I was myself the first who had sketched a course of exercises for young females. This course I had selected from the simplest of those exercises that come under the head of Gymnastics, but afterwards rejected them, perceiving, after mature consideration, that instead of enabling me to attain the end which I had proposed, they were likely to produce effects of a very different nature. I had designed to exclude the use of all instruments, tending to induce the necessity of the violent movements which could not but be dangerous to the pupils: but the new propagators of *calisthenics* (which are almost the same as those I had rejected), not knowing the dangers to which they were exposing their pupils, and finding the speculation profitable, continued to make them climb ropes, perform feats of strength, with wooden bars (at the risk of producing in their arms a development of muscle sufficient for an athletic), leap through a hoop with the address of

clown at Astley's, and flourish a stick, with all the dexterity of a posture master. At length the time arrived when parents had to repent of their mistaken confidence, and to lament its consequences as they manifested themselves in the appearance of bodily deformities, such as had never been known before. But that such must have been the necessary result of those exercises, on persons affected by any of the predisposing causes of spinal distortion already mentioned, would appear even on the slightest examination. A young girl, for example, has in consequence of sickness or a bad habit, the muscles of one side of the body weaker than those of the other; she is evidently liable to a deviation of the vertebral column arising from the want of support in the weaker side. In addition to this she is obliged to stand erect for an hour at a time performing violent exercises. The weight of her head, arms, and trunk (already more than she is able to support), is increased by the use of a heavy instrument, and she is compelled to exercise both arms equally. It requires no great penetration to see that the weaker side will have but a very small share in this movement,

and that it cannot be executed but by a great exertion of the stronger side, whose strength will thus be augmented at the expense of the weaker. Deformity will now begin to manifest itself, and the health, instead of improving, will begin to grow worse, from day to day.

Of the numerous cases of distortion confided to my treatment for some years, there have been many in which I succeeded in restoring the vertebral column to its natural position; but I must confess, at the same time that, in those cases in which I was completely successful, my having been called in before the growth of the disease was completed, proved not a little favourable to the application of my system. In other cases, I have often found with regret, that the age of the patient precluded the hope of effecting a complete removal of the deformity. My efforts were not however totally useless in any case, for although, from the cause just mentioned, it was impossible, in some instances, to accomplish a perfect cure of the distortion, I rendered the patients a more important service in the restoration of the strength and action necessary to enable the organs of digestion and

respiration to perform their respective functions, and thus succeeded in re-establishing the health which they had supposed lost for ever. Even with respect to ladies arrived at the age of twenty or four and twenty, whose cases had been given up as hopeless, I was sometimes agreeably surprised at the result of my exertions, as it manifested itself in the improvement of their figure. The change in their figure was indeed, in some instances, so striking as to amount almost to a perfect cure, inasmuch as it not only re-established the natural equilibrium in the proportions of the body, but gave to its muscles enough of force to enable them to support it in an erect position.

CHAPTER III.

On the means of preventing bodily deformity, and of arresting its progress.

IN the observations contained in the preceding chapter relative to the number of females afflicted with deformities produced by spinal distortion, parents and guardians will, it is presumed, find enough to induce them to give serious attention to the subject. It is my intention in the present chapter to point out, as briefly as possible, the means of preventing such deformities in those children who not being predisposed to them by any accident of birth, can only become subject to them from inaction and consequent debility of the muscles, as well as to show how in those who have brought from the womb defects of conformation which are developed only by the lapse of time, they can be discovered so early that their further pro-

gress may be arrested, and even a certain cure effected, which if they should remain undetected a few years longer, would be impossible.

By the observations which I have made on the great number of children placed under my care from time to time, for some years past, I have been led to conclude that the objects just mentioned, were to be obtained by no other means than a regular system of exercises calculated to develop by degrees, the strength of the muscles in the trunk and the upper and lower extremities, without superinducing a necessity for any violent exertion whatsoever. As such a development would be duly proportioned to the growth of the child, it would necessarily prevent that weakness which is one great cause of bodily deformity, and exclude those diseases which are inseparable from a defective conformation. But in the application of this system, it was necessary to examine with the most scrupulous attention the child who was to be exercised, in order to ascertain how his health would be affected by the exercise. If he were free from such internal maladies as have their seat either in the bones or the fibro cartilages, his strength and

health would manifest a daily improvement, in his movements he would discover more of address and activity and an increased vivacity of spirit. If, on the contrary, he carried about him the latent germ of any such disease, he would be soon fatigued by a little exercise, dejection and weakness would follow, his complexion would become pale, and his lips would no longer present that freshness of hue which is a sure index of health. In this case a physician should be called in without delay, and as soon as the child's health is re-established by the prescribed remedies, the muscles should be subjected to the exercise necessary to develop and maintain their vigour. This measure indeed the physician himself would advise as part of the course of treatment by which he would effect the complete recovery of the patient. In recommending the aid of a physician, I would not have it supposed that I refer to any of those whose cupidity would induce them rather to retain their patient in a state of continued illness, than forego an opportunity of adding to their profits the fee which they expect for an additional visit or prescription. This class of *Doctors* ought to content themselves with practising

on the weakness of wealthy hypocondriacs. In cases of real disease we should look for the men who, by the rare combination of integrity, talent and philanthropy, merit, like Abernethy, the gratitude of their fellow citizens and admiration of mankind.

What has been here advanced is equally applicable to children of both sexes, except that in the case of boys, when they have attained the age of twelve or fourteen, the intensity of the exercises must be increased so as to keep pace with the development of their muscular power. Of the exercises suited to the latter, fencing is one which cannot be too earnestly recommended; because, when taught on the principles established in a work which I published some years since, and a second edition of which will form the concluding part of this volume, it gives the pupil the firmness and easiness of carriage, and the graceful dignity of attitude which ever distinguish the well bred man.

CHAPTER IV.

*On the means of correcting deformities of the Spine
when they are considerably developed.*

As it has already been shewn that there are different kinds of deformity arising from distortion of the spine, each requiring its peculiar mode of treatment, and that this treatment must commence or terminate with bodily exercise (whether the object be to prevent the deformity, or to arrest its progress and effect its correction after it has made its appearance), it is proposed in the next place to advert to those cases in which its progress has not been noticed until it has been suffered to acquire a decided character, and to the most effective mode of treating them.

If, after having carefully examined the existing deformity, it appears certain that it can have proceeded only from that muscular debility

which, in consequence of facilitating the incurvation of the vertebræ in the region of the loins and back, causes the sternum to descend too near the pelvis, the treatment which I have always found most successful, consists in stretching the body by means of a small wooden bar placed horizontally and at such an elevation, that the pupil, when he has laid his hands on the bar, cannot touch the ground with his feet. (see plate 1.) While he is suspended in this manner, with his head well thrown back, a hand should be so applied to each side of his body as to increase or diminish the compression in such degrees as may be found necessary ; care being taken at the same time in passing the thumbs over the flexures of the spine, to press the ^{city}convex of the ~~incurvation~~^{ure} so, as to make the vertebræ resume their natural position. This suspension, which in the commencement of the cure must often be repeated, will, by facilitating the extension of the muscles of the diaphragm and the abdomen, (which must have suffered contraction from the previous habitual position of the body,) and by bringing into action the muscles of the loins and back, prepare them, without the slightest danger

of overstraining, for the application of the exercises necessary to their development. For, they will have to support but the weight of the inferior extremities. To this weight, a gradual addition may be made in proportion, as the hands of the pupil acquire strength to resist the suspension. The safest way of effecting this, is to make the pupil elevate the legs, by bending the joints of the knees and the hips, and then stretch them perpendicularly. The effect of this exercise on the legs themselves, is not less salutary than on those parts to which it is more particularly intended to apply. Among the advantages resulting from this mode of extending the muscles, it is not the least considerable that it does not expose young girls to the loss of that graceful roundness of arm which is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of feminine beauty, a loss which would be the inevitable consequence of the continual extension and contraction of muscle, rendered necessary by the use of such machines as I have seen employed on the continent. In many of the *orthopedic* establishments there, I have, with my own eyes, observed the frightful effects of those machines, and such

has been the impression they have left on my mind, that I would rather remain deformed all my life than submit for a period of not less than three years (the time in which they are generally considered to produce their effect), to a discipline so full of torture. Even in case of their effecting a cure, (a thing, by-the-by, which they are far from always accomplishing) they leave the patients in a state of health so broken, as sometimes to threaten their existence. Of this fact I have been an eye witness on more than one occasion, when in compliance with the advice of a physician, I have been called to attend on young persons whose muscular powers had been so completely destroyed in consequence of the state of inactivity in which they had been kept for several years by the use of those machines, as to be quite incapable of the functions which by their respective positions they are destined to perform. They retained no longer the strength required to sustain the body (which it was therefore found necessary to case in an iron boddice) or even to assist in the digestion of the food necessary to be taken for the preservation of life. Of those whom I was thus called on to attend, I found some

so exhausted as to be unable, for several days, to endure five minutes exercise at a time. By great care however in the choice of their exercise, and by adding not more than a single minute to the duration of the lesson every day, I succeeded at length in rescuing them from danger, and enabling them to bear without inconvenience a much longer exercise. On those occasions I always ordered them to support their bodies by means of a tolerably strong pair of stays during the interval between the lessons, taking particular care that they should not be braced too tightly, and that they should often rest themselves not on a plank, as is frequently done, but on a sofa. I thought it advisable also to leave them free as to the choice of position, and to abstain from insisting on the horizontal, the only use of which is to relieve the vertebral column from the weight of the trunk and the upper extremities.

I have often observed, among ladies between the ages of fifteen and twenty, defects of conformation in the trunk, proceeding neither from distortion of the spine nor contraction of the chest ; but from a muscular development which produced

a marked disproportion in the volume of the shoulders, threw the body on one side, and deranged its symmetry. Having made inquiry of their parents as to the state of their health for some years previous, I found it almost invariably the fact that those distortions were the consequences of distempers which, by necessitating the application of blisters or issues to one side of the body, had drawn to that side a humour which prevented it from acquiring the same strength as the other. In such cases I have always had the good fortune to succeed in restoring the proportions and symmetry of the body by the application of exercises capable of bringing the weaker muscles into action, and thus re-establishing the equilibrium of the whole muscular system.

CHAPTER V.

General Observations on the different Species of Deformity in the Body, and in the Upper and Lower Extremities.

IT must by this time, be pretty clear to the reader, that most of the deformities of the body proceed from distortions of the vertebral column. When these distortions, (whether their inclination be lateral or forward) are the consequence of muscular weakness only, recourse must be had to the means indicated in the preceding chapter for the purpose of arresting their progress and rectifying them. But if they are the consequences of disease in the intervertebral cartilages or the bones, all kinds of exercise are to be excluded until they shall have been recommended by the physician employed to re-establish the health of the patient.

I shall say nothing of the deformities of the body known by the names of *angular projections*

and *retroflexions*, knowing that the removal of the cause from which they spring is most frequently within the province of the physician.

But besides those there is another species of deformity attended with dangerous consequences, when too long neglected. It is that malformation of the chest commonly known by the name of *pigeon-breast*. The most efficacious remedy for this deformity consists in the application of exercises capable of expanding and strengthening the pectoral muscles and the organs of respiration. Such exercises would be rendered still more efficacious by being combined with occasional suspensions, in which the position of the hand on the bar should be varied, and a gradual pressure applied to the sternum and back. The latter expedient will be found particularly successful in the cases of children who are young enough to justify its application, and its effect will be to restore to the ribs their natural semicircular form, to enlarge the cavity of the thorax, and by affording the viscera seated there full freedom of action, to second their development.

As to the deformities of the inferior extremities,

which proceed from distortions of the knee-joints either inward or outward, it will be easy to correct them by the application of simple exercises. For these, by the manner in which they render it necessary to turn the foot in or out, greatly influence the action of the knee and assist in restoring it to its natural position. But if the deformity has made sufficient progress to affect the forward movement of the legs and the equilibrium of the body, it will be advisable, in the interval between the exercises, to employ such machines as are best adapted to the purpose. With respect to *contractions* of the knee or the elbow, the same mode of treatment should be followed as in the cases of distortion last mentioned. Having, in the foregoing chapters, given a sketch of those deformities of body which the parents and guardians of children are but too frequently doomed to witness, I could with equal ease have described the different series of exercises which should be employed in effecting their removal. But, as each deformity always differs in some respect from another, and an injudicious application of the exercise must fail to effect a cure, I have con-

sidered it prudent to abstain from giving any such description, lest I should expose respectable persons to be once more duped by the jargon of those pretended professors of whom I have spoken already. I shall, therefore in the following chapters, content myself with giving for the use of the masters of schools, the detail of certain Exercises which are calculated to bring into action the muscles of the upper and lower extremities, as well as those of the trunk ; and are at the same time so simple that, although they have a decisive influence on the general healthiness of the body, they may be performed in the smallest apartment, without the aid of any machine or instrument whatsoever. Then shall follow a series of progressive lessons on FENCING, in commendation of which it would be superfluous to add any thing to what has been said at the conclusion of the third chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

Course of Gymnastic Exercises.

THE Exercises which are presently to be described, will be found useful to persons of every age and condition. In the young they are calculated to develop vigour, activity, and address, at the same time that they are capable of encreasing the strength of the full grown, of insuring them a free circulation of the blood and an easy digestion, and of securing them against those maladies to which persons of sedentary habits are generally liable. Their intensity can always be increased or diminished to the highest or lowest degree that may be required ; and to the other great advantages which they afford, it may be added that they invigorate weak and delicate constitutions, re-establish those which have been broken and preserve those which are unimpaired. Let any one but prac-

tise them for half an hour a day, and it will be seen that they effect such an economy of time as to produce in the half hour an effect which no other exercise could produce even in two hours. Some persons imagine that walking is sufficient for the maintenance of health and vigour. But I know from experience that the contrary is the fact, as I have had among my pupils several gentlemen who, some for pleasure and others for health, were accustomed to perform pretty long journeys on foot. On their return I invariably found that, after having undergone much fatigue, they had increased the muscular strength of the legs (the members most employed in that sort of exercise). But that they had experienced no improvement in the muscles of the loins and stomach, though this was the object which they had proposed to themselves in undertaking such journeys, and although it could be attained under my direction—without any encroachment on the time which they had usually devoted to their business.

FIRST SERIES.

First Exercise of the Arm.

As a preliminary to the execution of this movement it is necessary to place the two heels together and on the same line; to point the toes a little outward, to stretch the legs, to draw in the stomach, ^{abdomen} to throw the breast forward and the shoulders back; to let the arms fall down by the sides with the fingers extended on the thighs, and to hold the head erect without suffering it to incline to either shoulder. Such is the first position. The pupil as soon as he is placed in this position, will close the left hand and place it on the breast, the elbow being at the same time drawn back and kept close to the body. The right hand also being closed will be drawn as far back as possible, without disturbing the position of the body, and with the nails turned downwards, then the right arm is to be swung forward without relaxing its tension, and made to pass close to the body, until the hand is carried to the same elevation as the crown of the head. The arm is then to be brought back

again in a similar manner, the pupil counting the numbers *one, two, &c.*, for the purpose of regulating the movement. After the right arm has performed this movement it is to be repeated with the left arm, the right hand being now placed on the breast, as the left had been before. Finally, the movement is to be performed with both arms, care being taken that what has been said relative to the position of the feet, legs, body, arms, and head, shall be strictly observed. (See plate II. fig. 1 and 2.) As, in order to preserve an equilibrium in the vigour of the inferior and superior extremities, each exercise of the arms should be succeeded by a corresponding exercise of the legs, we shall next describe.

The First Exercise of the Legs.

This Exercise is performed in the following manner. The pupil is put in the first position: the hands are placed on the hips, with the fingers pointing forward and the thumbs backward; the elbows are drawn back and the breast thrown forward; the right knee is then raised as high as

the breast without deranging the position of the body; the leg is kept perpendicular and the point of the foot is inclined towards the ground. The right foot is now brought back into its former position close to the left foot, which is raised in its turn as the right had been. This alternate movement of the feet is continued as long as possible, the pupil in the mean time regulating it by counting, *one, two, &c.*, and taking care that the *point* of the foot shall always be the part of it that first touches the ground. As soon as the movement is completed, he lets the arms fall down as directed for the first position, and, without separating the feet, bends both knees at the same time so as to bring them into contact with the breast, the hands being now placed on each side of the knees and the arms kept close to the body. This must at first be done gently, in order that the equilibrium of the body may be duly attended to. After having remained in this position for twenty seconds the pupil raises himself by stretching his knees with vigour, and stands upright on the tips of the toes. This must be done three or four times without intermission, and should be repeated after each movement of the legs.

Second Exercise of the Arms.

Placed in the first position the pupil closes both hands and lays them on his breast with the nails turned inwards. He keeps the elbows drawn back and close to the body, and the head erect; then commencing with the right arm, which he raises and stretches out in a line as nearly as possible parallel to the ear, without moving the head, he counts *one*; he next replaces the hand on the breast and counts *two*. Now dropping the arm along the thigh and striking with force he counts *one* again; then returns the hand to its original position on the breast and counts *two*. Thus counting *one* or *two* at each elevation or depression—he continues the exercise for some time with the right arm alone. He then repeats it with the left arm, and concludes by performing it with both arms at the same time. In the execution of this movement it will be necessary to keep the hands firmly clenched in order to give it full efficacy. (See plate II. fig. 3 and 4,)

Second Exercise of the Legs.

This Exercise is only a repetition of the first, except that it is performed by *bounding* from the tips of the toes, with the hands placed on the hips, the body erect, the shoulders thrown back and the head in the proper position. In general there should be one hundred and fifty changes of the position of the feet in one minute, and care should be taken to raise the knees as high as possible.

Third Exercise of the Arms.

The pupil, in the first position, will close the left hand and place it on the breast. He will then extend the right arm laterally at the height of the shoulder, keeping the hand still closed and the nails uppermost. In this attitude he will describe arches of circles from rear to front and from front to rear. The curves, which are to be described slowly, must be as round as possible and as large as they can be made without turning the body round. This movement is then to be repeated with the left, and lastly to be performed with both hands. (See plate III fig. 5 and 6.)

Third Exercise of the Legs.

This Exercise is performed thus; the hands are placed on the hips in the manner already described; the right foot is advanced forward and elevated, at the same time, as high as can be done without bending the knee. The point of the foot being lowered, it is now returned to its place when the left foot is advanced and raised in a similar manner. This movement is continued as long as possible, and with such rapidity as to effect one hundred alternations in a minute. When the foot is brought down the only part of it which should touch the ground is the extremity. If the Exercise be performed with due attention, its effect on the muscles of the legs will soon be manifest.

SECOND SERIES.

Fourth Exercise of the Arms.

The pupil, in the first position, will let his arms drop down by his sides, placing his hands on his thighs with the nails turned outwards and the fin-

gers at full length. He will then elevate the right arm laterally without bending it or turning the hand until it touches the head. He will now bring the arm and hand back to their former position with a quick movement, counting *one, two, &c.* alternately, at the elevation and depression. A second of time should intervene between the completion of one change of position and the commencement of another. The movement is now to be repeated with the left arm and, when this has been sufficiently exercised, it should be performed with both arms simultaneously, in such a manner that without the bending of the arms the back of the hands may be brought to meet over the head. The intensity of this movement can be increased by firmly clenching the hands. (See plate III. fig. 7.)

Fourth Exercise of the Legs.

Having taken the first position, the pupil will place his hands on his hips and begin the Exercise with the right leg, which he will raise laterally without bending the knee. By a rapid movement he will then bring it back to its original place

with the knee still unbent. Thus he will continue to raise and lower it regularly counting *one, two, &c.* and without disturbing the position of the body, which ought to remain erect and in a line with the leg which is at rest. The same movement must next be performed with the left leg, and lastly with both legs alternately, the one being raised as soon as the other is lowered,

Fifth Exercise of the Arms.

The pupil having put himself in the first position will close both hands and lay them on the breast with the nails turned inwards. He will now raise the elbows as high as the shoulders, having first drawn them back so as to bring the breast forward. (See plate IV. fig. 8.) The movement commences by a lateral extension of the right arm made with quickness and without turning the hand. The arm now forming a straight line from the shoulders to the hand is, with the same quickness, bent again, so that the hand may strike the breast. In performing this Exercise the pupil will count *one, two, &c.* and take care that one second may elapse

between every two movements. The Exercise is then to be repeated with the left arm, and lastly to be performed with both arms, simultaneously, care being taken to keep the elbows at the same elevation.

Fifth Exercise of the Legs.

This Exercise, commonly called the *goose step* is performed in the following manner. The pupil, in the first position, will place his hands on his hips, throw the whole weight of the body on the left leg and stretch the right leg forward, raising the foot as high as possible, with its point inclined downwards and the knee well stretched without throwing the body back. He will next bring the right foot close to the left (which is on the ground) but without suffering them to touch, and will stretch the leg backwards with the point of the foot turned down and the upper part of the body thrown back by bending the loins in order to avoid falling forward in the execution of the movement. After he has been for some time throwing the right leg alternately backward and forward in this manner,

he will repeat the Exercise with the left leg: If executed with attention it is one of the best Exercises known, for the legs and hips to which it gives a considerable degree of elasticity.

Sixth Exercise of the Arms.

The pupil in the first position, having closed both hands will place them on his breast, with the nails turned inwards, the arms close to the body, the elbows drawn back and the breast thrown forward as much as possible. He will then thrust the arm directly forward with considerable force, the hand being raised as high as the shoulder, and by a contrary action will bring the hand back to its former place on the breast and the arm close to the body. The same movements are to be next repeated with the left arm, and finally with the right and left together. It is to be continued each time as long as possible, and will be found to act powerfully on the muscles of the chest, the loins, and the shoulders, but more particularly on the tendonous part of the flexors which cover the arm joints. (See plate IV. fig. 9.)

Sixth Exercise of the Legs.

In the first position, the pupil will place his hands on his hips, and bound up from the spot on which he stands, with the feet kept close together and the knees bent forward so as to approach the breast as nearly as possible. He is always to descend on the tips of the feet without letting the heels touch the ground, and to stretch the knees as he descends.

At first this Exercise will seem difficult, but a little perseverance will enable the pupil to find his equilibrium readily in such a manner as to facilitate the action of the muscles of the legs, to drive the body straight upwards, and to enable him to come again on the very spot from which he had bounded.

THIRD SERIES.

Seventh Exercise of the Arms.

THE pupil, in the first position, will place the palms of both hands on the breast, the fingers of each hand being pressed close together, the thumbs

uppermost and the arms close to the body. With a quick movement he will now dart the right arm forward without changing the position of the hand, (see plate IV. fig. 10,) and then turn the back of the hand inwards (without bending the arm) so that the thumb will be below the fingers, and the little finger uppermost. He will next describe a semicircle from right to left, and when the hand shall have been carried as far back as possible without lowering the head or bending the body, the arm is to be bent at the elbow joint and the hand passing under the armpit is to be returned to its original place on the breast. The same movements are to be next repeated with the left and finally with both arms, the head being thrown back and the loins well drawn inwards.

Seventh Exercise of the Legs.

This lesson will point out the different ways of sinking and rising on one leg, the difficulty being increased at each repetition of the Exercise.

The pupil being placed in the first position will

close both hands, the arms being a little bent and kept out from the body. Then bending the left knee he will raise the left leg behind, and throwing the whole weight of the body on the right leg will gently bend the right knee by raising the heel in order to place himself in equilibrio on the point of the right foot only. He will now bring the left knee to the ground close by the right foot, taking care at the same time not to let the point of the left foot touch the ground. He will next raise himself, not by a violent start, but by the mere force of stretching the right knee, which is to bring him into his first position.

If the pupil be so feeble in the joints of the feet or the knees as not to be able to bring the knee to the ground at once, he must endeavour to acquire the ability gradually by bending more and more every day the knee of the leg with which he intends to commence the Exercise. When he finds himself able to do this easily with both legs, he will increase its difficulty by taking the left foot in the left hand, and will sink and rise again without letting the foot out of his hand, recommencing the

exercise always with the other leg. He will then repeat the exercise, taking the left foot in the right hand, and the right foot in the left hand, alternately.

As soon as he is able to execute each of those movements eight or ten times on each leg, the pupil will now repeat them in front, as follows. In the first position he will stretch the left leg forward, without letting it touch the ground. He will then bend the right knee and sink down until he sits on the right heel, balancing himself on the point of the right foot, but not suffering the left heel to touch the ground. This movement he will perform alternately with each leg. Those who are weak in the joints of the feet and legs ought to practise these exercises every day, were it only for ten minutes at a time.

Eighth Exercise of the Arms.

The pupil having put himself in the first position, will close his hands, place them on his shoulders with the nails undermost, the elbows as high as the shoulders, and the fore-arms covering

the upper arms. (See plate V. fig. 11.) He will commence the movement by extending the right arm without lowering it, and in such a manner that may form a straight line from the shoulder to the hand. Then he will bring back the hand to the shoulder, striking as hard as possible, and will continue this movement as long as he can without lowering the arms, or disturbing the position of the body, which should continue quite erect: The movement is to be repeated next with the left arm, and finally with both arms together.

Eighth Exercise of the Legs.

After having taken the first position, the pupil will place his hands on his hips, and poising himself on the left foot, will bend the right knee forward in such a manner as to bring the right foot as high as the left knee and close to it. He will then stretch the right knee forward striking hard with the foot and stopping it at the greatest possible height, while its point is inclined downwards, without disturbing the position of the body. Immediately after the extension of the right knee, the

right foot will be replaced on the ground close to the left foot. The movement having been performed several times in front, will be repeated with the other leg. This exercise is performed also by striking backwards in the manner which it is directed to observe, when the same movement is to be performed in front.

Ninth Exercise of the Arms.

This exercise requires that each movement should be performed with energy. After the movement has been executed, the pupil should remain for ten seconds in the attitude in which he finds himself, carefully observing the following directions :

In the first position he will close the hands, and with a quick movement will throw the right foot back, until its point shall be about twelve inches distant from the left heel, the knees being tightly braced, and the feet flat on the ground. At the same moment bending the right arm in the middle he will place the right hand on the left shoulder with the thumb underneath, the elbow being raised as high as the nose, and the head thrown back and

turned towards the right shoulder. The left arm is to be stretched backwards, and the left hand raised as high as possible. (See plate V. fig. 12.) It is necessary to remark, that the movements producing this attitude are to be made simultaneously. When the pupil is certain of the firmness of his position, he will change it by unbending the right arm, drawing it forcibly backwards, bending the left arm, and bringing the left hand on the right shoulder with the thumb undermost, the left elbow being now held at the same elevation as the right had previously been, and the head being turned towards the left shoulder. This exercise will be continued by performing these movements with each arm alternately. It acts with particular force on the muscles of the legs, the loins, the stomach, the breast, the shoulders, and the neck.

Ninth Exercise of the Legs.

The pupil having taken the first position, will place his hands on his hips and exercise the movement by crossing the right leg in front of the left, bringing the point of the right foot as far as possi-

ble to the left side without moving the body, which must remain firmly rested on the left leg. After this he will bring the right foot as far as possible to the right side, the body remaining unmoved the whole time, the knees being well braced and the whole resting on the left foot. Having continued the exercise with the right g as long as he is able, he will repeat it with the left, observing all the directions given with respect to the right.

This exercise may be performed by crossing the right leg *behind* the left, and proceeding in a manner precisely the same as when the right leg is crossed *before* the left; that is to say, no change takes place in the position of the body.

Tenth Exercise.

This exercise, although it requires the aid of the arms, acts more particularly on the trunk and the legs. The pupil, in the first position, will extend both arms laterally with the hands elevated as high as the shoulders. This attitude he will change by drawing the body a little back, and bending it laterally, so as with the right hand to touch the

right leg as low down as possible without throwing the body forward. (See plate V. fig. 13.) When he has brought himself as far down as possible he will raise himself again and resume his first attitude; that is, he will stand with his arms extended, and his legs placed perpendicularly. He will now bend his body to the left until with the left hand he shall touch the left leg as far down as he can, without throwing the body forward. This movement is to be continued alternately on each side as long as possible.

It is necessary to remark, that this movement, whether to the right or the left, is to be performed slowly; and that the arm opposite to that which is descending should be kept extended at full length, and perpendicular to the side.

FOURTH SERIES.

Exercise of the Arms in Walking.

These exercises performed slowly and attentively tend to give the body very graceful attitudes, and, being often repeated, cannot fail to correct the

awkwardness of position into which boys, especially those between the ages of twelve and sixteen, are so apt to throw themselves. They are calculated also to give grace to the different movements of the head and arms, and to increase the amount of the labour, by rendering the combined action of the arms and legs indispensable.

First Exercise.

The pupil being in the first position will, with a single movement throw the right arm forward, the hand being closed and raised as high as the head with the nails uppermost, the left foot flat on the ground and advanced as far as it can be without disturbing the erect position of the body, the head elevated and steadily fixed, the breast thrown forward, the knees well braced, and the left arm drawn back as far as possible, with the left hand closed and the nails turned downwards. (See plate VI. fig. 14.) When he finds himself firm in this attitude he will make a step forward, resting firmly on the left foot, and placing the right foot at the same distance in advance as the

left had been, will balance the arms (without bending them) so as to have the left arm thrown forward and the right drawn back and the body and the head in the position already described. He will continue this alternate change of position in the arms and legs while his strength is equal to the labour, taking care to recollect that when the left leg is advanced, the right arm should be advanced also, and vice versâ.

This exercise will be repeated by placing one foot in advance and the two arms in the rear, and swinging the arms forward or backwards, at each change of the feet.

Second Exercise.

After having taken the first position the pupil will close the hands, place them on the breast with the nails turned inwards, and the elbows drawn back and kept close to the body, and will throw the right foot forward as far as he can without displacing the body or the head. He will then dart the left arm straight forward, with the hand closed and raised as high as the shoulder. (See plate VI.

fig. 15.) In this attitude he will execute a new movement in advance with the foot and the arms, by keeping the right foot flat on the ground, bringing the left foot forward, striking with the right arm in the same direction, and bending the left arm so as to draw it back close to the body and to bring the left hand on the breast. The arm and the leg must be made to act simultaneously, and the pupil must not change his attitude for three or four seconds after each movement.

The exercise will be repeated by the pupil's darting both arms forward simultaneously as he walks, the knees being always well braced, the body erect, and the head elevated and steady.

Third Exercise.

The pupil, in the first position, will throw the right foot as much forward as possible without displacing the body, which must rest firmly on the left leg. The point of the right foot must barely touch the ground and be turned a little outwards, the knees being at the same time well braced. Then crossing the arms in front of the body, at the height

of the stomach, he will raise them gently until they form a circle above the head, which is thrown a little back, the knees and loins being always kept well braced and firm. (See plate VI. fig. 16.) And without stopping the motion of the arms he will let them drop down as low as possible, with the palms of the hands turned upwards until, without disturbing the position of the head or throwing the body forward, they shall have reached as far as the upper part of the hips with their backs turned towards each other. He will now recommence the movement by firmly fixing the right foot in the place where it happens to be, and the knees being kept well braced, will bring the left foot forward with its point placed as that of the right foot had been placed in the first movement. At the same time he will cross the arms in front of his body and proceed exactly in the same manner as directed before. This exercise, which may be practised in going around a room, must be performed slowly, and be continued as long as possible, with the head thrown back, the loins well drawn in, and the knees well braced throughout the performance.

As it would be tedious to point out all the exercises in detail, I shall only observe that the regular practice of those which have been just described, will soon put it beyond all question, that great advantages are to be derived from them.

I would particularly recommend the exercises of the legs described in the first series as being highly beneficial to persons affected with obstructions in the intestines, in as much as the slight vibrations produced by these movements have an effect much more salutary than that of the ordinary walking pace.

CHAPTER VII.

Introduction to Fencing.

Q.—What do you mean by Fencing?

A.—It is an exercise which two persons perform together by means of instruments nearly resembling swords, and according to certain positions calculated to facilitate its execution.

Q.—How do you call the instruments employed in this exercise?

A.—They are called *foils*. (See plate VII. fig. AA.)

Q.—Are there any other instruments required for this exercise?

A.—Yes; instead of a common shoe or boot the fencer wears a *sandal*, contrived to prevent that compression of the joint of the right foot, which without the sandal would be inevitable; a *strong glove* which reaches high above the hand, and is padded for the purpose of rendering the blows that

sometimes fall on that part harmless ; and a wire grating called *a mask*, (see plate VIII. fig. B. c. d.) which covers the whole face, and without which this exercise should never be attempted.

Q.—How many are the positions necessary in fencing?

A.—Three ; namely, the first, the second, and the third.

Q.—Are these positions distinguished by any other names?

A.—The first is called the first position, and has no other name ; but the second is called also the *guard* and the third the *development*.

Q.—What are the peculiar advantages of these positions ?

A.—The advantage of the first position, when well taken, is to prepare the body for being placed with precision and firmness in a fit posture for attack or defence : the advantages of the second position is, that it accelerates the velocity of the movements of the hand and the body, whether they be made in attack or defence, and enables us to approach or retreat from our adversary with security : and the advantage of the third position

or development is, that it enables us, to carry the attack with rapidity as far as the length of the arm and the extension of the legs permit us to carry it without walking, (for the left foot must remain fixed in its place) and that it enables the body to recover the second position with order and firmness.

Q.—How are the movements constituting this exercise distinguished?

A.—They are distinguished by three different names: the *attack*, the *parry*, and the *return*.

Q.—What is the *attack*?

A.—It is the act of directing the button of the foil by the help of the third position towards the body of your adversary.

Q.—What is a *parry*?

A.—It is a movement made with the hand for the purpose of meeting your adversaries blade with your own, and thus turning aside the thrust from the direction in which he has aimed it at your body.

Q.—What is the *return*?

A.—It is the act of bringing the button of your foil on the body of your adversary immediately after the *parry*.

Q.—Are there several species of attack?

A.—Yes; there are some which consist of a single movement, others of two, and others of three movements.

Q.—How do we name the first species of attack?

A.—It is called the *direct thrust*, because it is made by driving the foil straight forward on the same side on which it has met the foil of your adversary, and without quitting it.

Q.—How is the second species of attack called?

A.—It is called the *disengagement*, because it consists in disengaging your foil by describing a small circle so as to pass it under your adversary's weapon, and in extending the arm at the same time so as to bring the button of your foil on his body.

Q.—How are the other attacks named?

A.—Their names vary according to the number and different kinds of movement which they require. But it is here sufficient to observe that they all terminate in the movements of the second species of attack, their other movements being merely preparatory.

Q.—Are there many species of *parry*?

A.—Yes; according to the old method, which is still followed by the majority of teachers, there are eight, *simple* parries, namely, *prime*, *second*, *tierce*, *quarte*, *quinte*, *sixte*, the *half-circle*, and the *octave*.*

Q.—Why are they called *simple* parries?

A.—Because each of them is performed in a single line.

Q.—Are there other parries?

A.—Yes; there is one which is performed in a circle, either on the inside or the outside. It is called the *general* parry or *counter*.

Q.—Why is it called *general*?

A.—Because being performed by a single movement of the hand it embraces all the lines of attack.

Q.—Are there several kinds of return?

A.—There are two: of which the one is made immediately after the parry and without disturbing the position of the body; the other by means of the development, or third position.

* These terms are borrowed from the French, who formed them from Latin words, signifying *First*, *Second*, *Third*, *Fourth*, *Fifth*, *Sixth*, *Semicircle*, *Eighth*, respectively.

Q.—Can the exercise of fencing be understood and taught by one who is not very dexterous in its execution?

A.—If his want of dexterity arises from a bodily defect, he is not the less competent to teach: but, if he labours under no bodily deformity and still fails to perform the exercise dexterously, it may be fairly inferred that he has followed a bad method, or that he does not understand the principles of the art. *Yet it is a common subterfuge among bad masters who have learned no more of the art than an unscientific routine, which had become obsolete half a century before they were born, to allege with an affected air of candour that they are rather defective in the practice, but that they are perfect in the theory of the exercise and eminently qualified to teach it. An assertion so utterly destitute of probability, it would be but a waste of time to refute.*

Q.—In what does the inferiority of the old method consist?

A.—In the great number of useless thrusts and parries which it requires and which it serves only

by which we judge of the method as being perfect

to confuse the ideas of the pupil, and to retard his progress.

Q.—Why are they useless?

A.—Because they are never employed in the practice of fencing.

Q.—What do you mean by the practice of fencing?

A.—It is the art of employing aptly and putting in practice the principles which one has learned in the lessons.

Q.—What are the thrusts most useful in practice?

A.—The simple thrusts, which must be made with rapidity, as we see them made by the most eminent fencers. *These know full well that too many movements of the hand repeated in presence of a skilful adversary would soon bring his point into contact with their body.*

Q.—Is there then a new system on which the performance of this exercise can be taught?

A.—Yes; there is one well known in practice to the most distinguished fencers of the present age, but not taught by any of them.

Q.—What are the advantages of this new system?

A.—By rejecting those parts of the old method which were useless and incompatible with a fine execution, it has so simplified the exercise as to render it susceptible of an easy, clear, and full explanation, calculated to accelerate the progress of the pupil and to shew him that, instead of resembling a perplexing and inextricable labyrinth, it should more properly be compared to an open walk whose issues are readily and easily to be discovered. That the attainment of a graceful and fine execution is not a matter of great difficulty, will be evident from the progressive lessons on fencing, which are to constitute the remainder of this volume.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

The work commences with an explanation of the principles of the first position, of the guard, or second position, and the mode of advancing and retiring.

It then proceeds to describe the development, the manner of recovering, the changes of the engagements, and the direct thrust. These descriptions constitute the second lesson.

The third lesson shews how to perform the disengagement, the *feint* (one and two), and the *double feint* (one, two, and three).

The fourth lesson teaches the *double disengagement*, the *round and a half below*, the *feint* (one, two), with the *avoiding of the counter*, and the *manner of avoiding the two counters crossed*.

The fifth lesson treats of the practice of the *battement* and *disengagement*, the *battement* and *feint* (one and two), the *battement and double disengagement*, and the *battement* and *round and a half below*.

The sixth lesson teaches the *battement menace below* and *thrust above* (both on the inside and the outside), and the *battement menace below*, and *avoiding the counter* (equally on the inside and the outside).

The seventh lesson treats of the manner of parrying the counter of quarte and tierce on the simple disengagement, the feint (one and two) the double disengagement, and the manner of varying them.

The subject of the eighth lesson, is the manner of executing the parry of the counter in quarte and tierce, on the battement and disengagement; the battement and feint (one and two) and battement and doubling the disengagement.

In the ninth lesson, the pupil is made to perform the parries of the counter of quarte, counter of tierce, the two counters crossed, the double counters inside and outside, and the return in the guard, and in the development.

The tenth lesson shews how the thrusts, parries, and returns, are to be connected together.

The eleventh lesson shews how those sword

players are to be encountered who, without taking the trouble to parry, meet all attacks, with a direct thrust.

The twelfth and last lesson, contains the necessary instructions respecting the exercise called the *mur* (or quarte and tierce) and the salute.

The attacks, which make part of the following lessons, being the only attacks necessary in the practice of fencing (since they are sufficient to frustrate all the parries that an adversary can make), it must be unnecessary, and would be inconsistent with that simplification which I have proposed to myself to enter into details, which would but perplex the pupil.

Of all the works that I have read on the art of *Fencing*, I hesitate not to affirm, that the treatise of Mr. Laboissiere is that which is least disfigured by blunders. He was, indeed, the great innovator of his day, and has reached the highest degree of celebrity as a fencer, at Paris, about the year 1760. Willing as I am to concur in the high opinion generally entertained of Laboissiere's work, I cannot but observe that its claim to the merit of simplicity is one to which candour will not allow me so

readily to assent. For, a work of this kind drawn out, as his has been, to the compass of sixty long lessons must necessarily embrace details alike incompatible with brevity and simplicity. The reader will scarcely doubt that this is the fact, when he is assured that the masters who still persist in teaching after the old method have been able, with all their partiality to tediousness and perplexity, to employ, in their silly endeavour to prop up their own tottering system, no more than a comparatively small part of Laboissiere. Not doubting that the votaries of the old system would have yielded to the judgment of an unprejudiced public in discarding their own method for the improvements of Laboissiere, had they not been prevented not only by their own dullness, but by the tediousness and complexity of his treatise from mastering its contents, I applied myself to an examination of the art under every aspect in which it could be contemplated. By means of a rigorous analysis I was enabled to disengage its essential principles from a mass of details with which they had been encumbered by former writers. Having found those few principles amply sufficient to in-

sure a graceful and fine execution. I have scrupulously rejected details calculated only to produce that tediousness and perplexity which have been the reproach of my predecessors.

FIRST LESSON.

Of the First Position—the Guard, the Advance, and the Retreat.

Having put the foil into the hand of his pupil, the master will shew him how to hold it by placing the handle with its convex uppermost between the thumb and fore finger of the right hand. The thumb being on the convex he will make the pupil in closing his hand incline the three other fingers towards the pommel of the foil. He will next make him place the right heel close to the angle of the left foot, so that the two feet will be at right angles to each other, the legs being well braced, the arms falling easily down by the sides, the nails of the hands being turned downwards, the blade of the foil placed in the left hand, the shoulders

low and free, and the head erect and turned towards the right. The pupil so placed will be in the *first position*. (See plate VII. fig. 17.)

Having examined and corrected such faults as the pupil may have made in taking the first position the master will now make him proceed to the guard by directing him thus; “*cross your arms softly before you.*” In gently passing them close to the body (the right arm being uppermost) raise them slowly above your head; bringing the left hand backward, hold it as high as the top of your head, and in such a manner that the line from the left hand to the left shoulder will be a semicircle; bring the right hand forward at the height of your breast with the nails turned upwards, the right arm being bent, the elbow turned inwards and held at the distance of four or five inches from the body, with the button of your foil raised as high as my eyes. Now detach the right foot from the left, bring it forward about twice the length of its sole. Keeping the right heel still in a right line with the left ancle, bend both knees equally, until the line of the right knee descends perpendicularly on the instep of the right foot; and that of the left

knee, on the point of the left foot. the knees being open and the right hip being drawn in without turning the body too much to the left, as many masters teach their pupils to do, in order, as they say, to prevent them from presenting too great a surface to their adversary. These teachers seem not to suspect that in turning the body we turn the hips also ; that the knee falls on the inside and the foot is no longer firm ; and consequently that it is impossible any longer to preserve that command of our movements which is indispensable to a perfect execution. (See plate VII. fig. 18.)

The master having made the pupil repeat the two positions and satisfied himself that he executes them with completeness, precision, and continuity, will make him perform the advance and retreat by addressing him thus, “ place yourself in guard and advance.”

The advances are executed by bringing the right foot a *sole* forward and then bringing the left also the same distance forward.

The retreats are executed by drawing the left foot a *sole* backwards and bringing the right foot also the same distance backwards.

In the execution of the advances and retreats care should be taken almost to brush the ground with the feet and to keep the knees bent and placed in the manner already described.

SECOND LESSON.

*Of the Development,—the Manner of Recovering,—
Changing the Engagement,—the Direct Thrust.*

When the pupil shall be found able to execute with ease the movements in advance and retreat in the manner prescribed in the foregoing lesson, the master will proceed to the explanation of the development or third position. (See plate VIII. fig. 19.) For this purpose he will say to the pupil, “place yourself in guard; without straining the right arm stretch it out before you, so as to form a right line from the button of the foil to the right shoulder.” Having given those directions, he will next make the pupil raise the right foot and bring it to the distance of two *soles* forward, telling him at the same time, to stretch the left ham so that it may serve as a sort of spring to drive the body

forward with promptitude. Care must be taken to observe that the right hand should all this time retain its proper elevation, which is the same as the top of the head. The left arm is to be stretched in the same direction as the left leg, the fingers of the left hand being extended and the thumb pointing upwards. After having corrected such faults as may have been committed in the development, and make such observations as he shall deem pertinent and necessary, the master will now make the pupil *recover*, by addressing him thus; “bend the left ham, recover yourself by bringing the right foot into the place in which it had been before the development; open the knees, raise the left arm so as to form an arc of a circle from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder, and bend the right arm keeping the right hand turned in the manner prescribed in the preceding lesson for the guard. The development (preceded the extension of the right arm) is to be repeated frequently and attentively, in order that it may be performed with that rapidity and precision, without which it is impossible to excel in this art. The *first position, the guard, the development*, and the manner of *recover-*

ing being most sufficiently explained, they shall henceforth be considered as things known, and the pupil shall be directed to perform them by being merely told to put himself in the *first position, in guard*, and to *develop*.

When the pupil has acquired the necessary precision in these positions, he is next to learn the manner of changing the engagements. In this part he will find no difficulty; since, according to my method, there are but two of these changes; namely, *high quarte over the arm* and *high quarte inside*. I admit no thrust or parry requiring the nails to be turned downwards; because I have observed that all the thrusts which I teach can be executed with the hand quarte, and without any of those turnings which must of necessity diminish their rapidity as well as their precision. As to my manner of teaching the parries. I have also found that it is sufficient to meet the adverse weapon in whatever direction it may come, and exempts the pupil from the necessity of making those movements of the arms which have so decided a tendency to impede his progress.

Some masters are accustomed to present their sword to the engagement in the *lower line* ; an engagement which they call the *semicircle* ; others engage with the hand turned *tierce* and elevated ; while others do it in such a manner as scarcely to make you feel the button of their foil. In these different ways of presenting the sword to the engagement I have not, with every disposition to adopt what is best, discovered any thing that could induce me to make the slightest change in my own manner, which is to hold my weapon before me with its point at the height of my adversary's eyes. My reason for preferring this mode was, that I well knew that the other modes of attack just mentioned must be directed in lines all within the range of my circle or counter, and therefore that the engagement and parry were simultaneous. I have encountered many Italian players who have met me with those different positions which to many fencers seem to present difficulties. But such tactics have never affected, in the slightest degree, the advantage over them on which I had calculated ; and, had my intention been to attack them,

I was well aware that, instead of parrying, they would meet my attack with a direct thrust. In order to avoid all disputes as to the thrusts, and to decide who was right or wrong, much as I knew the value of my attack, I never made it off hand. I tried a menace by half extending the arm, and joined to it a slight movement of the body, indicative of an attack. Thus I brought my adversary to act according to his intention, which in this respect never varies. I then caught his weapon *quarte* either inside or outside, and *returned* above or below by a disengagement or direct thrust, according to the position of my adversary's hand or the pressure of his weapon against mine. The result has always been such, that, as I have already said, I shall continue to prefer my own manner of presenting the sword in the engagement before any other that I have seen, and shall give myself no concern about such positions as shall present themselves out of the lines of *quarte* and *tierce*.

The master, therefore, making the pupil place himself in *guard*, will present his own weapon in the *engagement of inside quarte*, and tell him its name, shewing him, at the same time, how the

line of the direct thrust is to be closed. He will next tell him "*to change the engagement,*" and explain to him, that the *change* of the engagement is to be effected by describing a small circle about his adversary's weapon, as quickly as it can be done by a slight movement of the fingers. After having made him repeat the changes of the engagement outside and inside; and having satisfied himself that the pupil thoroughly understands them, the master will take his sword *quarte inside*, "change the engagement; since on your changing the engagement I neglect to close the line of the direct thrust; now extend your arm with the nails of your hand turned upwards, raise the right foot, stretch the left ham and develop. This is called *the direct thrust outside*. In guard, change the engagement; I again commit the same fault as before in neglecting to close the line of the direct thrust; extend the arm, raise the right foot, stretch the left ham and develop; this is also the *direct thrust inside*." The master will now be careful to correct each thrust, and will cause it to be repeated until the pupil's performance shall display sufficient ease, precision, and firmness.

THIRD LESSON.

Of the Disengagement in the high and low Lines—

Of the Feint (one and two), and the Feint (one, two, and three) above and below, on the Inside and the Outside.

As soon as the pupil is able to practice the foregoing directions with facility, it will be time to shew him how he is to make the disengagements. After placing him in guard, the master, having engaged his sword inside quarte, and closed the line of the direct thrust, will say to him, “pass your weapon to the other side, by describing a circle sufficiently large to wind about my arm without touching it, and extending your arm at the same time, direct the point of your weapon at an elevation equal to that of your adversary’s breast, and develop; you will thus have made the *disengagement quarte outside*: recover in guard.” The master now making the *engagement quarte outside*, will cause the *disengagement* to be repeated *quarte inside*, making the same observations as he has made with respect to the outside disengagement.

After having made the *outside* and the *inside* disengagements, the master will engage his weapon *quarte inside*, and will say, "my opposition prevents you from thrusting right forward ; if you disengage, I shall make the *parry tierce*. What are you to do in order to reach me with a simple thrust?" Should the pupil be unable to tell, the master will say to him, "let the point of your weapon down as low as my waist, extending your arm without turning your hand, and then develop. You will have performed the *disengagement of low quarte inside*, and will have avoided the parry of tierce : recover in guard." The master taking the sword *outside quarte*, will cause the *disengagement of low quarte outside* to be repeated, for the purpose of avoiding the *parry of quarte*, taking care that the hand does not change its position. Having caused these disengagements to be repeated in the high and low lines, inside and outside (parrying them by tierce, quarte, the semi-circle and second), the master will proceed to the feint (one and two) for the purpose of avoiding the parries. With this view, engaging his weapon *quarte inside*, he will say to the pupil, "menace

me with a disengagement outside, by passing your sword and stretching your arm in the manner already directed for the first time of disengaging. If I parry tierce, pass your weapon to the other side by describing a small circle with a slight movement of your fingers as quickly as possible, and, without bending the arm, develop ; you will have thus executed the feint (*one and two inside*. The feint *one and two outside* is to be executed in the same manner ; thus you will have avoided the simple parries of tierce and quarte." With respect to the feint (one, two, and three), it is executed in the same manner, by making two feints before the disengagement (which is the decisive stroke) for the purpose of baffling the simple parries of tierce and quarte and quarte and tierce.

Proceeding next to the feints (one, two, and one, two, three) below, the master having engaged the sword *quarte inside*, will say to the pupil, " menace me with a disengagement below, on the inside, by lowering your point and stretching your arm ; if I parry in the semicircle, bring your point again higher than my wrist, without deranging your hand or bending your arm ; now

develop, and you will have executed the *feint below* and high quarte, for the purpose of baffling the parry of the semicircle. The low feint (one, two) on the outside is executed in a similar manner, for the purpose of baffling the parry called *the second*.

The low feint (one, two, three) is made by menacing below and above, for the purpose of thrusting below on the inside or the outside, and thus baffling the semicircle and quarte, and second and tierce.

The disengagements, feints, and double feints, require that the master should pay the greatest attention to the precision with which they are executed, and be by no means sparing of his observations.

FOURTH LESSON.

Of the Double Disengagement ; the Round and a Half below ; the Feint (one, two,) and avoiding the Counter or Circle ; avoiding the two Counters crossed.

After having shewn how the feints for avoiding the simple parries are to be performed, and

having ascertained that the pupil can execute them with precision, the master will now teach him the double disengagement, and let him know in what case it becomes necessary. It is employed for the purpose of avoiding the counter or circle, whether in quarte or tierce. The master having placed the pupil in guard, and having engaged his weapon quarte inside, will say to him ; “ menace me with the disengagement outside ; if I follow your sword by describing a circle, double the disengagement and develop ; you will thus have baffled the counter of quarte. Place yourself in guard ; I take the engagement outside quarte ; menace me with a disengagement quarte inside ; if I follow your sword by describing a circle, double the disengagement and develop ; you will thus have baffled the counter in tierce. In guard ; I engage quarte inside ; if you double the disengagement outside, as in the preceding case, I shall parry with the counter of quarte and the simple parry of tierce. How are you now to baffle these parries by simplifying the thrust ? ” If the pupil cannot answer, the master will say ; “ Instead of making two entire circles for the double disen-

gagement outside, make but the round and a half, that is to say, menace me with a disengagement outside; I will parry in the counter of quarte, let your point descend below and strike in the line of low quarte instead of completing the second disengagement by striking in the high line on the outside; you will thus have avoided the counter of quarte and simple tierce."

The round and a half below for the purpose of avoiding the counter of tierce and simple quarte is performed in the same manner. Here it is to be remarked that the hand is to be held at the same elevation for all thrusts, whether they are made above or below, on the outside or the inside.

The double disengagement and the round and a half below, on the inside and the outside, being repeated, the master, after placing the pupil in guard, will make him perform the feint (one, two) and baffle the counter. This feint of the engagement quarte will baffle simple tierce and prime (the latter being made in the counter of tierce); it will also baffle simple tierce and the counter of tierce, and tierce and the semicircle, and, from the

engagement of tierce, the same feint will baffle quarte and the counter of quarte. Thus, after having engaged the sword quarte inside, the master will say: "menace me with a disengagement outside; if, without stopping at the simple parry of tierce, I continue my parry by describing a circle, double the disengagement after your first feint on the opposite side and develop; you will have now avoided tierce and counter. It is by a movement exactly the same that we avoid tierce and prime, and tierce and the semicircle. I engage my weapon outside quarte; menace me with a disengagement inside; if, without stopping at the simple parry of quarte, I continue by describing a circle, double the disengagement outside, after your first feint, and develop; you will have now avoided simple quarte and the counter of quarte."

The parries of simple quarte and the counter of quarte may also be avoided by a menace inside and the round and a half below on the inside. By this movement the play is at once varied and abridged.

As soon as the pupil is able to execute with ease,

firmness, and precision the movements explained in the preceding lessons, he must be taught *the two counters crossed*, that is to say, *the counter of quarte and the counter of tierce*, or *the counter of tierce and counter of quarte*. For this purpose the master will place him in guard and say to him ; “ menace me with the round and a half below on the inside, in order to avoid my counter of quarte: not meeting your weapon I cross the counter of quarte with ~~the~~ the counter of tierce ; recommence the round and a half below on the outside and develop. Then you will have avoided the counter of quarte and the counter of tierce.” The master afterwards engaging his sword quarte outside, will cause the same movement to be executed in this engagement in order to avoid the counter of tierce and the counter of quarte.

This combination of movements is sufficient also to baffle the counter of carte and prime (the latter being made by the counter of tierce) as well as to baffle the counter of quarte and the semicircle. It requires great command of the body and great lightness of hand, although it consists of no more

than two movements. For the round and a half below is executed at once and without stopping in the high lines (before which it passes) whether on the inside or the outside.

FIFTH LESSON.

Of the Battement and Disengagement. The Battement and Feint (one and two.) The Battement and Double Disengagement. The Battement and Round and a Half below.

The pupil being placed in guard, the master will engage his weapon quarte inside without pressing, and will say: "If in fencing you perceive that your adversary holds his weapon softly, you must be cautious and not attack off-hand; that is, without assuring yourself of his weapon either by a battement or by a *lock*. Of these two means I should always prefer the former, although I have found the latter very often successful. Now since you feel no pressure of my weapon against yours, and you intend to attack me, beat the point of your weapon against the *fort* of mine in order to move

my hand, which will, no doubt, endeavour to recover its hold. After the battement, quickly disengage over the arm and develop. I engage the sword quarte over the arm, you are to beat outside for the purpose of disengaging inside. This movement is executed in the same manner as the preceding." The master immediately after this will cause the battement to be followed by the feint (one and two), the double disengagement, and the round and a half below.

The same movements may be performed after the battement by a change of the engagement, which is effected by beating the adverse weapon in the line opposite to that of the engagement.

SIXTH LESSON.

Of the Battement shewing the Point below and thrusting above.—Of the Battement shewing the Point below and avoiding the Counter inside and outside.

After having placed the pupil in guard, the master will engage his sword quarte inside and say ; " beat the sword in the engagement and

threaten the disengagement below, if I parry with the semicircle, raise the point of your weapon quickly above my wrist and develop. I engage my sword over the arm; you are now to *beat* and threaten the disengagement below; If I parry *in second*, raise your point as before, strike over the arm and develop. In guard; I take the sword quarte inside; beat the sword and threaten me with the disengagement below; as I have not been able to secure myself by the semicircle, which left the high line open so that I have been hit in that line; I make the counter of tierce; then from low quarte inside, where you have menaced, you make the round and a half below on the outside, and develop. Thus you will have avoided the parries of the semicircle and counter of tierce. In guard; I engage the sword quarte over the arm; you beat the sword and threaten me with the disengagement below: without stopping at the parry in *second* I describe the counter of quarte; you make the round and a half below and develop: thus you will have avoided the parries of second and counter of quarte."

After these movements have been performed,

each in two distinct parts (as has been shewn in the foregoing lessons), I make the pupil repeat them by combining the movement of the body with that of the hand, so as to perform each at once, with completeness and rapidity.

Down to the present day it has been usual to teach a vast number of thrusts and parries. I have consulted the professors as to the utility of those numerous movements, (difficult to be understood, but still more difficult to be executed) and have found them unanimous in the opinion that they are calculated to give freedom and flexibility of hand. But they had no suspicion that if they produce flexibility in the hand, they produce also that perplexity in the head to which and to no other cause we are to ascribe the confusion of movements which disfigures the performance of most fencers. As the latter circumstances had not escaped my observation, I could not doubt for a moment that the time consumed in learning so many movements would be much more usefully employed in *repeating* the comparatively small number which are really useful in practice, so as to be able to perform these with the greatest pos-

sible continuity, precision, and rapidity. For, the utmost degree of flexibility in the wrist can avail nothing in attack, if the legs do not perform their functions in accordance with the movement of the hand.

In the conclusion that no other movements, besides those which I have described, are necessary in attack, I have been uniformly confirmed by the great number of trials that I have had with the most eminent fencers—professors as well as amateurs. I had moreover inferred from all the trials of skill which had come within my observation, that players were beginning to consider the practice of employing two feints before the decisive stroke, as one too complicated and too slow against an adversary of equal skill (I speak of first and second rate players), because it was always found to give the advantage of a hit over the player by whom it was employed.

Since then these attacks are sufficient to baffle the regularity and rapidity with which first-rate players parry, they must necessarily be more than sufficient to baffle the parries of a hand so slow and unsteady as that of an inferior player. It is there-

fore useless to describe a greater number of them, and indeed it would be found, on summing up, that they would amount in reality to no more than a few feints added to those which we have described.

The cuts over the point preceded or followed by some movements have always appeared to me injudicious in the attack. I therefore never teach them to be made unless in the *return*. The habit of meeting every attack by a thrust (which many teachers do) I have always looked upon as tending to mar the player's performance by making it a mere return of thrust for thrust. Instead therefore of teaching my pupils to meet an attack by extending the arm, I have always accustomed them to parry. The following lessons will treat of the parries and returns in guard and in development, of the connecting of the thrusts with the parries and returns, of the manner in which those players are to be combated who, disregarding the parries altogether, thrust against every attack, and lastly of the exercise called *le mur*, or tierce and quarte.

Of the Parries.

Hitherto it has been usual to teach, for the purpose of defence, eight simple parries distinguished by the following names; *prime, second, tierce, quarte, quinte, sixte, semicircle, and octave*. Each of these parries has its counter and its double counter. Of these four and twenty parries I dispense with three and twenty, retaining that of the counter or circle which, if performed in my manner, is amply sufficient for defence, as will be seen in the chapters on the parries.

In the opinion of all teachers of fencing in former times as well as at the present day, the parries are the most difficult part of the art. I have thought so too, and for that reason have endeavoured to devise a mode of defence which would combine simplicity with security, and which if it did not altogether prevent the commission of faults (a thing not to be expected) would, at least, considerably diminish their number and magnitude. Having commenced my search by an examination of the simple parries of *quarte* and *tierce*, in order to

secure the high lines in which I was exposed to attack I found it impossible to avoid being hit by *one, two, three*, although my manner of making the simple parries is totally different from that commonly adopted. For the common manner consists in grinding the sword along the adversary's blade by turning the nails downwards and extending the arm in order to parry tierce, and in grinding the sword again along the adversary's blade by turning the nails upwards in order to parry quarte. But my manner consists in a slight movement of the wrist, which carries the point of my weapon for quarte and tierce, as far to the right and the left as the flexibility of the wrist allows, the nails being always turned upwards and the arm in the position prescribed for the guard. I saw that this was the only way in which these two simple parries alone could be rendered fully adequate to the purpose of defence, inasmuch as the hand would find it easy to execute them with rapidity. This method will seem extraordinary and insufficient to those who have never deviated from the principles of the old school, which are not only so complicated as to be repulsive to

many but contain errors calculated to retard the progress of the art. In proof of this it will be sufficient to remark, that among at least ten thousand persons who follow this profession in France, and have been practising on those principles, some for twelve, some for fifteen, and some even for thirty years, there are not more than five or six first rate and perhaps about thirty second rate players. But knowing that the only decisive test of a principle is experiment, and finding that when tried by that test the method which I had invented for myself lesson by lesson, conformably to the direction of my fencing master (whom I attended for the short space of six months) had, without my taking any other lessons in my whole lifetime, enabled me to cope with the very first fencers in Paris, I did not hesitate to adopt it permanently.

By examining the parries of the semicircle an second, which close the low lines on the inside and the outside, I perceived that, when I sought to defend the low line on the inside by means of the semicircle, my adversary extricated his sword and touched me in the high line which remained open, and that it was impossible for me to terminate my circle in tierce, or to return to the parry in quarte

quickly enough to secure myself. I remarked also that, when I wished to defend the low lines on the outside by the parry of second, it was baffled in like manner, and I was touched in the high line without being able to terminate my circle in quarte or return to the parry of tierce with sufficient quickness. In consequence of the difficulty that I experienced in defending myself by means of the simple parries of tierce and quarte for the high lines and by means of the semicircle and second for the low lines, I concluded that the simple parries would by no means serve my purpose. I then tried the parries of the counters, (which are regarded by all teachers as general parries*) not in the

* Mr. Laboissiere is inconsistent with himself on this subject. In the second chapter on the parry of the counter he says, "the counter is to be considered as a general parry, because it embraces all the lines in which one is liable to be attacked either above or below on the inside or the outside;" and lower down the same page he says; "the counter should be made by revolving the point of the weapon through the circumference of a circle as small as possible in order that it may be made more quickly."

I think then I may be allowed to remark that, as the counter should close all the lines, high and low, the part of the foil with which the defence is made should describe a circle sufficiently large to embrace all, otherwise the lower lines would be always exposed.

manner in which they are taught by most persons, but by so disposing them as to close all the lines in which I was liable to be attacked. Thus after having placed myself in guard in the manner prescribed in the first lesson, I considered the length of my foil; I divided it into two parts; the one for the offensive and the other for the defensive; the one reaching from the button to the middle of the blade, and the other from the middle of the blade to the handle. From the height at which the button was placed, without moving the arm or turning the hand, I let the foil descend as low as the flexibility of the wrist permitted. I now perceived that the *fort* of my weapon came just low enough to parry in the low lines. I therefore brought back the button to its ordinary position in guard, and turning it to the right and left, as far as I could without displacing my hand, found that my wrist retained all the force required to parry above and below, on the inside and outside in a circle. From that moment I abandoned the use of the simple parries, and confined myself to the practising of my hand in describing circles inside and outside, taking care to make them as large as

possible by bringing the button round from a point as high as the head until it reached as low as the knee, and giving the curve a form somewhat elliptical at the sides. By these means I made the defensive part of my weapon exactly at the height at which the low thrusts can be made, taking particular care at the same time that the hand did not change its position. At first this method of making the counters on the inside and outside seemed to myself to be slow, as it will probably seem to my readers. But I soon felt convinced, and the conviction was subsequently confirmed by what I observed among my pupils, that practising the exercise of the circles or counters gives, in a very short time, much vigour and flexibility to the wrist and a consequent facility and quickness of execution. As an additional proof that the simple parries are deemed unfavourable to a vigorous and fine execution, it may be observed that the most eminent fencers, (such for instance, as Bertrand, Gomard, Mathieu Coulon, and Charlemagne.) Whenever they have to play with one who is nearly equal to them in skill, always prefer the counters, while with an inferior

player they employ only the simple parries, because these by their slowness and unsteadiness of hand allow their adversary time enough to oppose their weapon by the simple parries. Indeed I have never seen a player, whatever might be his quickness, who could, when opposed to a player of equal skill, parry the feint *one, two, three*, by three simple parries, and at the same time close the lines in which he found himself menaced by the two first feints. Several fencers imagine that they have succeeded in parrying if they have not been touched by the attack, although the attack may have been only avoided by a retrograde movement of their body or their legs which has merely caused their adversary's point to fall short of the measured distance. But parrying does not consist in movements of that kind. For by such movements a person who had never before taken a foil in his hand may escape from all attacks. Parrying consists in baffling the adversary's attack with the hand and the foot firm, and without any writhing of the body calculated to mar the gracefulness of the attitude and to spoil the effect of the return. I have therefore as I have already said, adopted

the parry of the counter, reserving it to myself to vary it at pleasure, as will be seen in the following lessons. All things being however duly considered, it must be allowed that the parry of the counter may be baffled; but it will be baffled less easily than any other, since your adversary can never be sure which you will take. An instance of the truth of this observation occurred, in 1826, to a gentleman who had been then taking lessons of me for eight months only. He went to Paris and intimated to me that he wished to practise fencing during his sojourn in that city. I directed him to Mr. Gomard, and after three or four encounters between my pupil and Mr. Gomard, the latter complimented him on his performance and the successful resistance that he had made to his utmost skill. In fact all the pupils that I have taught have been found able, after no more than six months instruction, to cope with amateurs who had had three years practice.

SEVENTH LESSON.

Of the Counter of Quarte and Counter of Tierce against the Simple Disengagement, the Feint one and two, the Double Disengagement, and the manner of varying them.

The master having made the pupil place himself in guard, will engage his weapon *quarte inside*, and disengage it outside. This disengagement he will make the pupil parry by the counter of *quarte inside*, taking care not to send the thrust quite home, lest he should intimidate the pupil, and cause him to make a movement of the body that would mar the gracefulness of the attitude, and the precision of the execution. Then engaging his weapon *quarte over the arm*, he will make the disengagement *inside quarte*, which the pupil will parry by the counter of *quarte over the arm*.

In order to make the parry of the counters more easily understood we will in future designate the parry of the counter of *quarte over the arm* as the counter of *tierce*, although the hand must always continue *quarte*.

As soon as the pupil shall have begun to be able, with facility, and without displacing his hand, to parry the disengagements made slowly against him, the master will gradually increase the quickness of the disengagements in order, as it were, to stimulate the hand of the pupil to the parries; carefully observing that the body has nothing to do in their execution, provided the hand be kept steadily in the prescribed position. The pupil will soon perceive the strength and suppleness of the wrist considerably improved and that, by being kept in this position, the hand can be controulled with promptitude and ease. For, the arm is to take no part in it, and the movement of the sword made for the purpose of parrying is limited by the extent of flexibility in the wrist which reaches just far enough to close the line whether above or on the inside.

After having exercised the pupil in parrying the counter of the engagement on each disengagement, as has been directed already, the master will repeat the disengagements over the arm and on the inside and make the pupil parry them

by the opposite counter; that is, from the engagement quarte inside he will disengage quarte over the arm and make the pupil parry this disengagement with the counter of tierce by locking the sword and bringing it back into the line in which he meets it—namely over the arm. Then he will engage his weapon quarte over the arm and disengage inside, which disengagement the pupil will parry with the counter of quarte by locking the sword and bringing it back inside quarte. This movement, which give both the head and the hand of him who attacks a strong concussion, has also the advantage of at once closing all the lines and of facilitating the return by excluding the idea of a new attack from the position in development.

The manner of making the counters against the simple disengagements over the arm. And on the inside being sufficiently known, we shall proceed to the parry of the counter on the feint *one* and *two*; the master having placed the pupil in guard, and engaged the sword quarte inside, will make the feint *one* and *two*, which the pupil will parry by the counter of tierce. He will then engage the sword quarte over the arm and make the feint one

and two outside, which the pupil will parry by the counter of quarte. After having trained the hand of the pupil to perform this parry rapidly, he will now engage quarte inside, and make the feint *one* and *two* inside. This the pupil is to parry with the counter of the engagement (which is the counter of quarte). The parry commencing with the menace, which is the first disengagement; will meet the adverse weapon in the low line outside, and will bring it back, by a lock, to the engagement quarte, which was the original engagement. From the engagement over the arm, the master will make the feint *one* and *two* over the arm, and cause the pupil to parry with the counter of tierce. Then the parry meeting the adverse weapon in the low line on the inside will bring it back, also by a lock, to the engagement over the arm. On this parry, which intercepts the action of the feint, *one* and *two*, it is well understood that the feint *one*, *two*, and *three* cannot be executed, because the sword is met in the middle of the second movement, and brought back by the lock into the line from which it had come.

The master now engaging the sword quarte in-

side, will menace with the disengagement over the arm, addressing the pupil thus; "Parry the counter of quarte; if you do not find my sword quarte inside, come back to the counter of tierce, which you will terminate wherever you meet my sword. Thus you will have made the counter of quarte. And the counter of tierce, and the latter movement will have found my sword either in the line above, after the double disengagement, or in the low line inside on the round and a half below." After this the master taking the sword quarte over the arm will make the double disengagement inside, or the round and a half below, and tell the pupil to parry with the counter of tierce and the counter of quarte. The opposite counter, (by the locking of the sword) is employed with considerable success in every attack by varying it alternately with the counter of the engagement so as to disconcert your adversary. For instance, "I engage the sword quarte inside and stand on the defensive. Desirous to discover my manner of parrying you menace me with a disengagement over the arm; I parry with the counter of quarte. In order to ascertain beyond all doubt whether I am accus-

tomed to this parry, you repeat your menace, which I meet with the counter of tierce by locking the sword. This causes you to pause and reflect, and I seize the moment of suspense to surprize you with a vigorous attack." A hand well trained to change the parry of the counter at pleasure with quickness and regularity (a thing easily attainable by diligence) is the more troublesome to an adversary as, by not allowing him to calculate on an open attack, it compels him to be always feeling his way, and thus deprives him of much of his confidence and power.

EIGHTH LESSON.

Of the Counter of Quarte and Tierce against the Battement and Disengagement, the Feint one, two and the Double—Disengagement.

Having placed the pupil in guard and engaged the sword quarte the master will make the battement inside and disengage, which the pupil will parry by the counter of quarte. Then engaging the sword over the arm he will repeat the batte-

ment over the arm and disengage inside, making the pupil parry the counter of tierce. After that, taking the sword again inside quarte he will make the battement inside and disengage over the arm : the pupil will parry with the counter of tierce by locking the sword and terminating the circle. The battement over the arm in order to disengage inside will be parried with the counter of quarte by locking the sword likewise.

In the next place the master engaging the sword quarte inside will perform the battement followed by the feint *one* and *two*, which the pupil is to parry with the counter of tierce. Then engaging the sword over the arm he will repeat the battement followed by the feint *one* and *two* over the arm, which he will cause to be parried with the counter of quarte. Taking the sword again quarte inside, the master will recommence the battement *one* and *two* inside and cause it to be parried with the opposite counter ; that is, by the counter of quarte which is the counter of the engagement. Then engaging the sword over the arm the master will make the battement *one* and *two*, which he will cause to be parried by the counter of the en-

gement also, which is the counter of tierce. On these two parries it is always expected that a lock will take place.

The master engaging the sword quarte inside will make the battement and double the disengagement over the arm, which he will cause to be parried by the counter of quarte and the counter of tierce. Afterwards engaging the sword over the arm he will beat and double the disengagement inside, and cause the parry to be made by the counter of tierce and counter of quarte, taking care not to forget that the second of these parries will be made by locking the adverse sword, which the pupil will have met at tierce, at quarte, or below, after the first counter. Against the battement and double disengagement the cross counter may be employed with the same success as against the simple disengagement or the battement and disengagement. It is proper to remark that the counter of the engagement is never the opposite counter, except against the feint one and two.

I would recommend it as being an excellent exercise of the wrist, and as being well calculated to habituate the arm to the keeping of its position,

that the pupil should often make the double counter of quarte and the double counter of tierce without stopping between them. These movements may be employed to the number of three or four at each side, by beginning with quarte and tierce alternately. For, after the force of habit has brought one to be able to make three or four counters at once on each side with tolerable rapidity, there will be but little cause to apprehend any error on the part of the hand, when there is but one counter to be performed on each side. In this exercise, which one can practise alone, it will be necessary to make the circles so large that the button of the foil may pass about a foot above the head and six inches below the knee, and that the curvature should be greatest at the sides. The result of this will be, that, as in fencing with another we are impelled by the excitement of the play to contract the movements for the sake of greater rapidity, we shall be certain to attain the measure necessary to secure both the high and the low lines.

After having taught the parries described in the seventh and eighth lessons, and when I am satisfied that the pupil comprehends and can execute

them with precision and firmness (which he usually does within the compass of two months) I make him repeat them in connection with the returns in *guard* against all the attacks forming the subject of the first six lessons, gradually increasing the rapidity of the attacks at each new lesson in order to give him a corresponding quickness in performing the parries and returns. Above all things care must be taken not to move the body. After twelve or fifteen lessons on the returns in *guard* I make the pupil perform the same returns in the development or lunge, joining to them the feint *one* and *two*, which is itself an excellent return on the retreat of your adversary. Subsequently to these instructions he learns to combine the thrusts with the parries and the returns whether in *guard* or in development. At this stage of his progress certain technical phrases more or less long are unavoidably introduced, his exercises constitute a study of the real practice of the art and are afterwards continued as a lesson. This method is well calculated to secure to the mechanical part of his performance the requisite vigour, firmness and precision, and his judgement is formed

by the constant repetition, during the combat, of such observations as are necessary to be made with respect to the moral and intellectual portion of the art. For in fencing it is often necessary to be able to act on the emergency ; and to be able to do so requires a rare combination of judgment, dexterity and vigour. Too great a complication of thrusts and parries would be prejudicial to the requisite harmony of execution.

An exercise of the above description continued for six months has invariably afforded me the satisfaction of seeing my pupils perform gracefully, and compete successfully with fencers who had taken five times as many lessons. The rapid advancement of my pupils is owing in no slight degree to a mode of proceeding which the professors certainly censure, but which I have as certainly found successful. As soon as the pupil comprehends the disengagements, (*one, two, and one, two, three,*) and the *double disengagement*, I set him to the practice of the art. I have no doubt that so bold a departure from common usage will make many persons stare and shrug their shoulders, but the result of the innovation amply com-

pensates me for the censorious scepticism of those by whom it is condemned without having been tried. I had observed that in learning other arts, the early combination of practice with theory was found to accelerate the progress of the pupil, and applied the principle to the art of fencing. For instance, my dancing master, a man the least likely (of all the dancing masters I have known) to be charged with ignorance of his profession, addressed me thus at the conclusion of my first lesson ; “ I have shewn you how you are to perform the *battements*, the five positions, and the changes of the feet : before we meet again repeat them as often as you can, in order that you may be able to perform them better at the next lesson.” He knew well that I should perform them badly at the next lesson, but he knew also that by practice I should acquire a *tact*, which no instruction of his could communicate. And so it is with other exercises. I have therefore acted on the principle, and the performance of my pupils leaves me no reason to regret its adoption. A pupil who has had no practice, even after six months given to the theory, will take a long time before he can under-

stand the application of what he has learned, or acquired the tact necessary to enable him to avoid his antagonist's weapon in attack, and meet it in the parry. Why then not save time by making theory and practice go hand-in-hand? The theory and the accompanying observations of the master may be continued to eternity, and if practice be introduced at an early period, is not the master present to correct any faults that the pupil may commit? It is also an undoubted fact that there are but few, if any, pupils who would have the patience to spend six months in mere theorizing. They will generally, if not universally, attempt to practice long before the conclusion of that period, not in the presence of the master who would rebuke them for their presumption, but in his absence; and when they are free to conform to the suggestions of right reason. Indeed, I had been particularly encouraged to adopt this plan, by observing, that several young men who, like myself, after having received some lessons, begun to practise unknown to their masters, had made a rapid progress which the master never failed to attribute to the excellence of his own method. If masters, who are the

first to censure this mode of proceeding, would but condescend to remember, that there are but very few of themselves who have not spontaneously adopted it when they were pupils ; I am persuaded that nothing but an overweening self-love and want of candour could prevent them from admitting that I have been right.

The four last lessons will comprehend the exercise of the parries and returns in the guard and in the development, a series of attacks, parries, and returns both in the guard and the development, all joined together ; the manner of combating those players who, disregarding the parries, meet every attack with a thrust ; and lastly, the exercise called *le mur*, or tierce and quarte.

NINTH LESSON.

Of the Parries of the Counters of Quarte and Tierce ; two Counters Crossed, Double Counters Inside and Outside ; Returns in the Guard, and in the Development.

When the pupil is found tolerably expert at the parries, which form the subject of the preceding

lessons, the master will make him perform the return in guard immediately after the parries. Having placed the pupil in guard he will engage the sword quarte inside, and say ; “ Meet my disengagement by parrying with the counter of quarte ; if after your parry, I have my hand high, return below by dropping the point of your weapon and extending your arm without moving either the feet or the body.” Again, engaging the sword quarte over the arm, the master will tell the pupil to meet his inside disengagement by parrying with the counter of tierce and by the return below in guard on the outside. Then engaging again quarte inside, the master will repeat the disengagement over the arm and inside, and make the pupil meet him with the counter of quarte and counter of tierce and the direct return in the two high lines.

Now taking the sword again quarte inside, the master will repeat the disengagements and cause them to be parried with the opposite counter, which will be followed by the same returns according to the height of the hand. Again taking the sword inside quarte, he will make *one two*, and cause the pupil to parry with the counter of the

engagement, and to add to the parry the same returns as had been added to the parry of the disengagement^l in the high lines and below. Returning to the engagement inside quarte, he will make the *double disengagement* and the *round and a half below* alternately, in order to make the pupil parry first with the counter of quarte and counter of tierce, and next with the counter of tierce and counter of quarte, following each parry with the above named returns (made always in guard.) Here he will warn the pupil and say ; “ Take care, I have remarked your manner of defending yourself, and from the engagement quarte in which I am now, I shall baffle your two counters, if you begin them again : tell me what would you do, under such a circumstance in real practice ? If the pupil hesitates, or does not answer correctly, the master will say ; “ There are several ways of barring my intended manœuvre, which must consist in doubling over the arm and doubling inside : first, you may parry with the double counter of quarte, instead of crossing the two counters ; and secondly, you may parry with the opposite counter by a lock on the first disengagement.” After these

parries, the returns should follow, by means of the disengagements below, the direct thrusts, and the disengagements of high quarte, either over the arm, or on the inside, according to the position of the assailant's hand, or in case of pressure.

The master engaging the sword inside quarte, will repeat all the attacks and make the pupil parry in the manner just described, and will shew him how the return is made by what are called *cuts over the point*. This sort of return is to be employed only against a player who keeps his hand stiff and low, and it is employed against such a player only because it is expected that, after his attack, he will endeavour to master your sword by pressing his weapon strongly upwards. The point of support occupied by the *foible* of his sword on the *fort* of yours, can have no great effect on your hand. You are therefore after the counter of quarte, to keep your arm bent at the elbow (for the purpose of counteracting his pressure,) to turn the hand with the nails downwards and with your sword rolling on his, and then to *cut over the point*, by turning the hand quarte as quickly as possible, without entirely unbending the arm. After the parry of the

counter in tierce against such a pressure, turn the hand and *cut* inside by a quick movement of the wrist. It is a point well understood, that the arm should not be extended for the purpose of executing the cut. For if you do so, as when making a return in guard, the body of your adversary will be too near to allow you to extend your arm; and if your adversary has time to recover before you can make the return, the disengagement or the feint (*one two*) will be found much more efficacious; one may, however, as a return, employ the cut and disengagement on the inside and the outside with considerable success, when your adversary retreats and you lunge.

After these instructions have been properly digested, all the thrusts and parries will be repeated in connexion with the returns made in developing by the low thrusts inside and outside, or by the direct thrust over the arm and inside, or by the disengagement over the arm and inside, or lastly by the feint *one* and *two*, which is well calculated to take effect in retreat.

TENTH LESSON.

*On the manner of combining together the Thrusts,
Parries, and Returns.*

The pupil being now able to execute with precision and firmness all that has been taught in the foregoing lessons, it will be necessary to accustom him to use technical phrases, such as the following ; “ disengage outside quarte ; I parry with the counter of quarte and disengage over the arm ; parry the counter of quarte and strike below ; the same thing shall be done with the engagement over the arm.” After this, the master taking the sword quarte over the arm will make the disengagement inside, causing it to be parried by the cross counter and returned by the disengagement over the arm. The same thing shall be repeated with respect to the engagement of quarte inside. The master will engage quarte inside and strike *one* and *two*, which he will make the pupil parry by the counter of tierce and the return of the disengagement below. The same thrusts, parries, and returns, shall be made from the engagement over the arm : the master engaging the sword quarte inside, will repeat

the feint one and two, and will tell the pupil to parry by the counter of the engagement which, in this movement, is found to be the opposite counter. He will do the same with respect to the engagement over the arm. Thus he will continue the series of attacks, directing the pupil to parry with the counters and cross counters alternately, and always to add the returns either in guard or in development.

When the pupil shall have been accustomed to these little phrases which comprehend an attack, a parry, and a return, it will be necessary to make them more complicated, and to check him, as often as possible, by pointing out the errors (whether of the head or hand) which he may have committed. By this process he will soon come to understand the practice thoroughly.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

Of the Manner of combating those Players who, disregarding the Parry, thrust against every Attack made on them.

As I have already remarked, it has always appeared to me a matter of very little difficulty to deal with those players who meet every attack

with a thrust; a mode of proceeding which they call *taking the time*. They do not reflect that this mode may transform the play into a mere return of thrust for thrust. Although fencers of this description have been looked upon as formidable antagonists, even by some players of eminence, I must confess that they have never appeared so to me, knowing, as I do, that by a little management one may compel them to repeat their favourite movement as often as he pleases. The master therefore, after engaging the sword quarte inside, will say to the pupil; “menace me with the disengagement quarte over the arm, extending your arm, stamping with the right foot, and keeping your body back: if I make a direct thrust, lock my sword in the counter of tierce, and return according to the position of my hand, as I have directed in the lessons on the parries and returns. Thus from the two engagements the execution of your menaces may be followed by the parries and returns, which you will vary at one time by the counter of the engagement preceding your menace, at another by the cross counter, in order to deprive your adversary of the means of baffling your parry,

should he entertain any idea of doing so. But this is not likely. For the performance of such players is the result of habit, not of reflection."

It is nevertheless certain, that these players have perplexed some who enjoyed a high reputation in the art, and who were always discussing with them the value of the double thrust. You ought to parry, said the one: How can I? said the other: This is the mode to which I am accustomed, and if you are superior to me, prove your superiority by hitting me without being at the same time hit yourself. In my opinion, such discussions prove nothing in favour of the one mode or the other. It happens sometimes that an explanation may take place between two able players. But it happens rarely, and only when one of them has forgotten himself.

TWELFTH LESSON.

*On the Exercise called Le Mur, or Tierce and Quarte;
and on the Salute.*

The exercise called *le mur* consists only of simple disengagements conventionally made over the

arm and on the inside, and parried by tierce and quarte. It is generally considered as being preparatory to the real practice of the art. This exercise when performed with great attention is well adapted to give quickness, firmness, and precision in the execution of the disengagements, which, as it terminates all the movements, is therefore the most useful. For, the other movements of the sword by which the disengagement is preceded are but feints or menaces. Two fencers being placed face to face and in the first position, will put themselves in guard and engage quarte inside, taking care to preserve the proper distance. Then stamping the right foot twice they will both place themselves in the first position (at the same time if possible) by drawing back the right heel to the ancle of the left foot, and raising the right hand as high as the crown of the head with the nails always turned up, and bringing the hand and the sword to the right, in order to present the body uncovered. This is called the *opening* in fencing. Then, each inviting the other to commence, the younger player, if there be any difference of age between them, will, in courtesy, leave it to his antagonist to

begin, who, lest time should be wasted in ceremony, will accept the concession. The latter placing his sword before him and extending his arm in the direction of his adversary's body will develop. But he will not bend the left leg or touch the body of his antagonist which is for the present undefended. He will therefore remain in the development about four seconds, in order to assure himself of his position. This is called *taking distance*, in fencing. Then resuming the position in which he had been (before he developed) he will perform the salute by moving the hand and the sword to the left and to the right. The other will also perform the salute by a similar movement of the hand and sword; and both, after saluting each other, will place themselves in guard, engaging their weapons quarte inside. It is a ruled point that he who allows his antagonist to take his distance should place himself in guard with the left leg, in order that he may not place himself too close to him by doing the contrary. After these preliminaries, he who has taken his distance will disengage quarte outside and the other will parry with the opposition of quarte over

the arm, by bringing the point of his weapon as far on the outside as the flexibility of his wrist will allow. After this parry the assailant turning the point of his weapon out of the direction of his adversary's body, by loosing the little finger and the ring finger, which are placed near the pommel, the fencer who parries will let the right hand descend on the right thigh by describing an arc of circle inside. The assailant having resumed his guard, the parrier will engage quarte over the arm. From this engagement the assailant will disengage quarte inside, and the parrier will oppose it with quarte inside (conforming himself to the direction given for the parry over the arm) and will also let his hand fall on his thigh by describing an arc of circle on the outside. Now when the assailant shall have made a dozen disengagements over the arm and on the inside (which the other player will always parry by quarte and tierce from the position of the guard) he will strike twice with the right foot and place himself in the first position by *opening*. Then the player who has parried will extend the right arm, and, without deranging his position in guard, will develop for the purpose of

taking his distance. After having placed themselves in the first position, they will both repeat at the same time the salute to the right and left, and then salute each other ; after which, they will place themselves in guard with the engagement of quarte. Now he who has commenced the movement will in his turn, parry by tierce and quarte all the disengagements over and inside the arm, carefully observing what has been said relative to that parry. Having terminated his disengagements, the assailant from the position of the guard, will stamp with the right foot twice, and the parrier having done so too, both will place themselves in the first position and *open* at the same time. Next they will place themselves in guard by drawing off the left leg ; they will stamp with the right foot, return to the first position, by bringing the ancle of the left foot to the right heel ; and then repeat the salute for the third time. Again placing themselves in guard with the right leg and stamping twice with the right foot, they will conclude with putting themselves in the first position, by bringing the ancle of the left foot again (in advance) to the right heel, engaging the two swords

quarte, and raising the hand as high as the face. This exercise must be performed with the greatest harmony between the players, otherwise the movements will be deficient in continuity and grace.

CONCLUSION.

It has always appeared to me that the main object of those who have hitherto written on the subject of fencing, was rather to make a book than to elucidate the difficulties of the art. I have endeavoured therefore to strike out a plan more simple, (and therefore more easily to be followed) by describing the attacks in the order assigned to them by reason of the parries, which give rise to them. I hope it will be found by such as peruse my treatise, that if I have not produced a perfect work, I have at least given several hints that will be useful, not only to amateurs, but even to professors.

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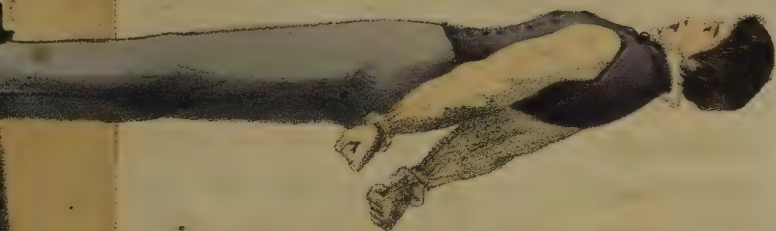
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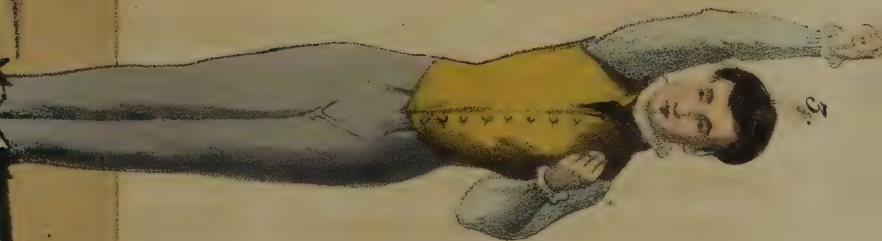
Fig. 1.



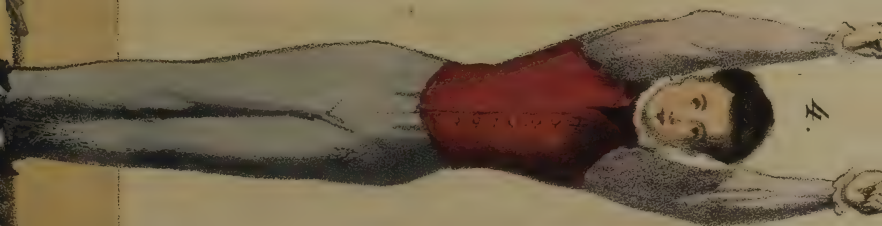
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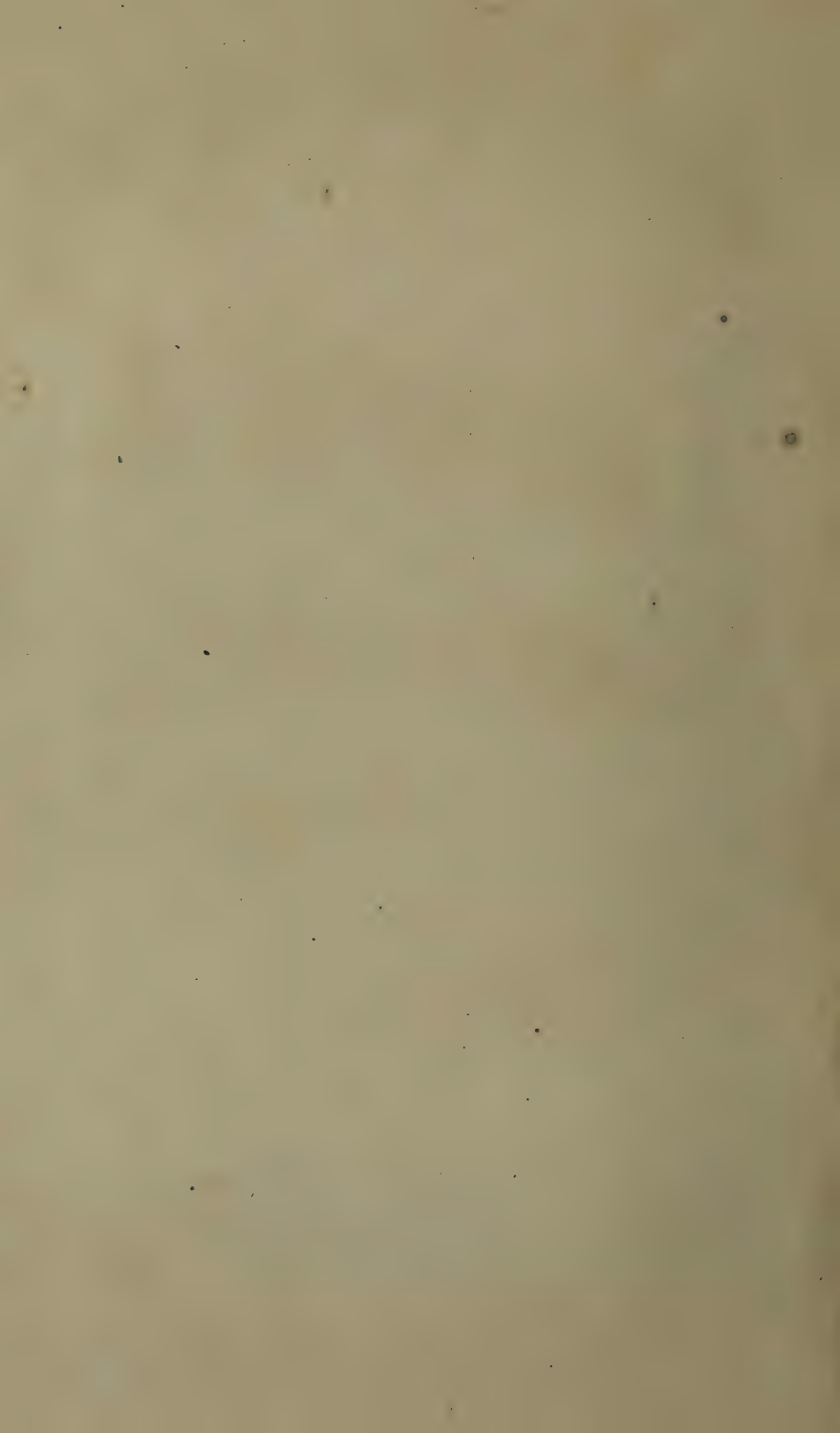


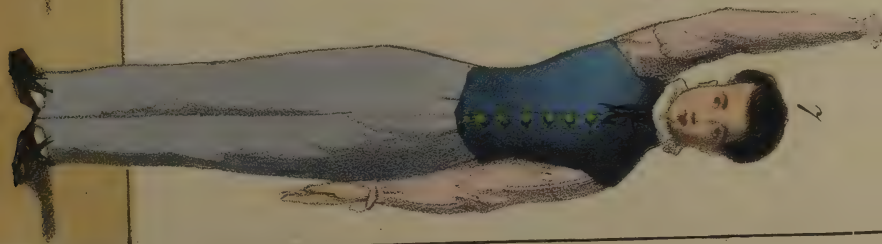
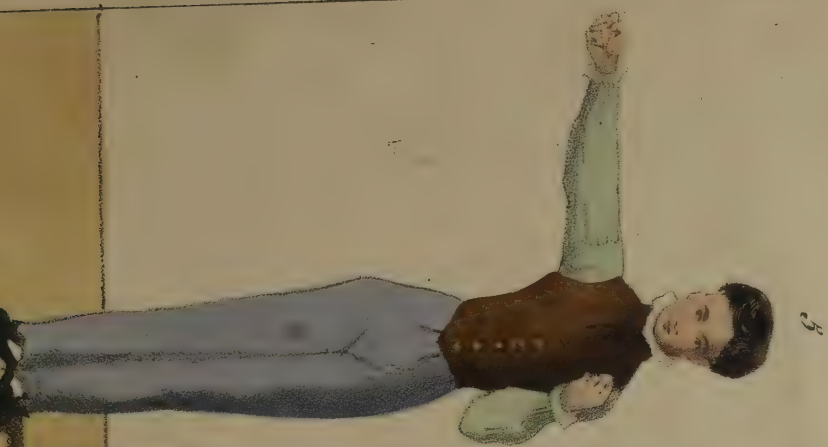
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4.







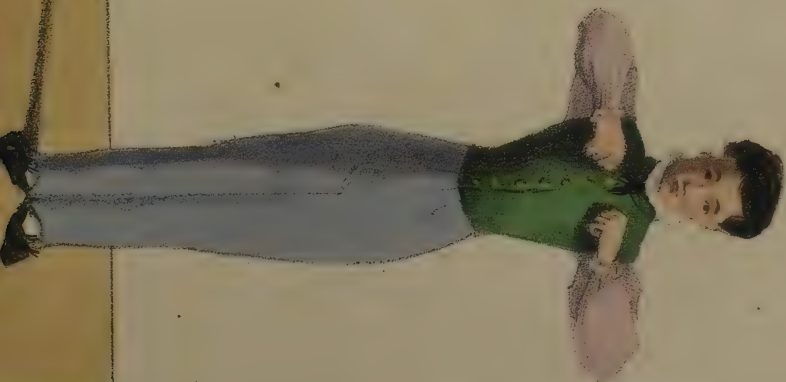
10



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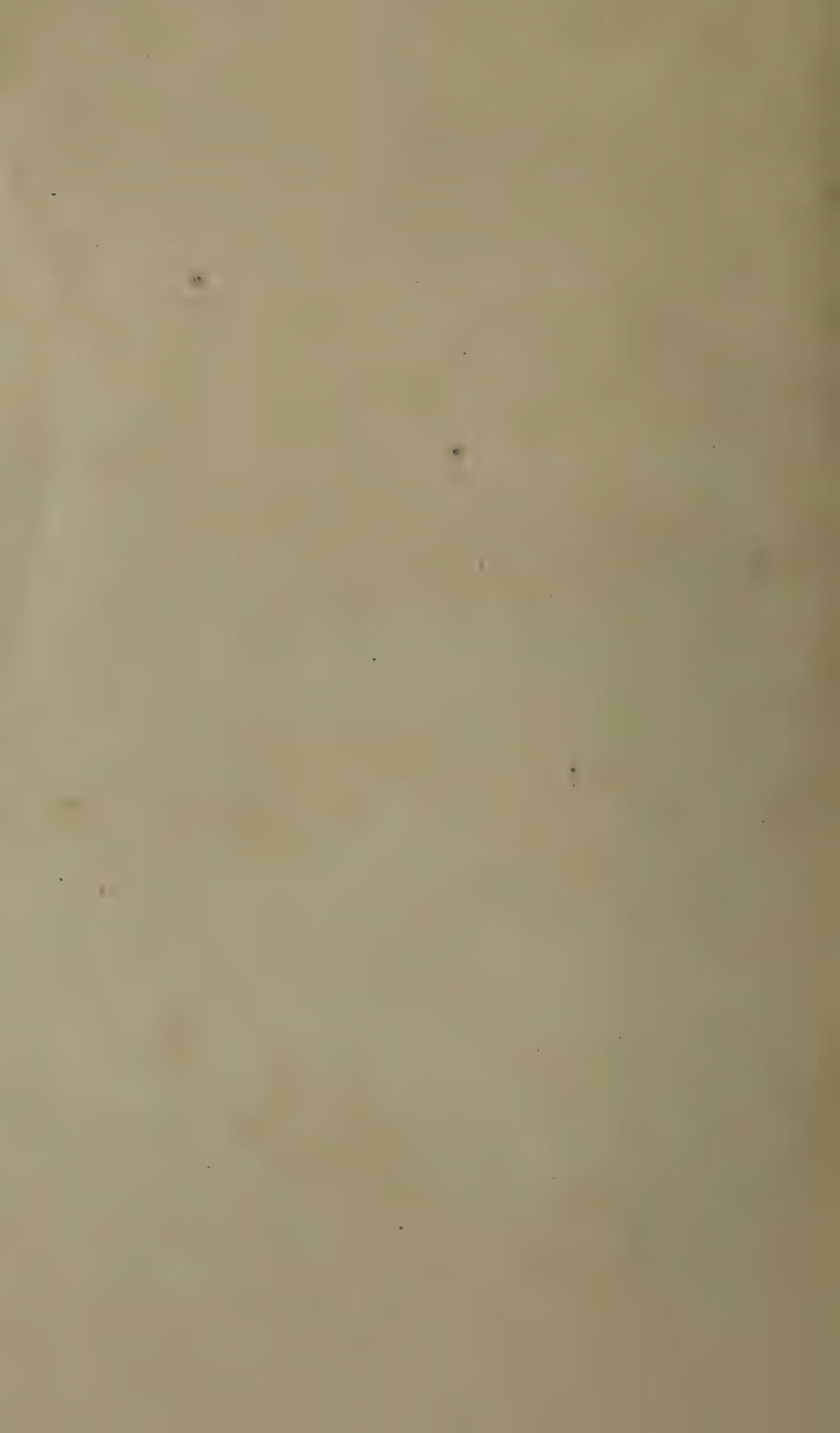
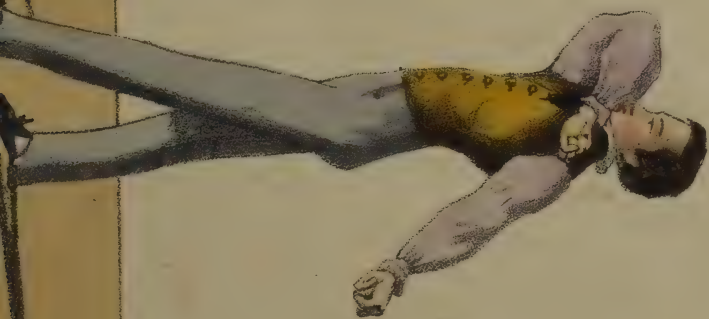


Fig. 11.

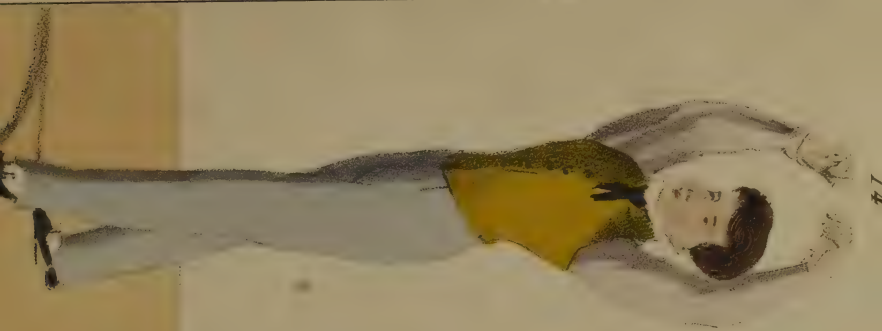


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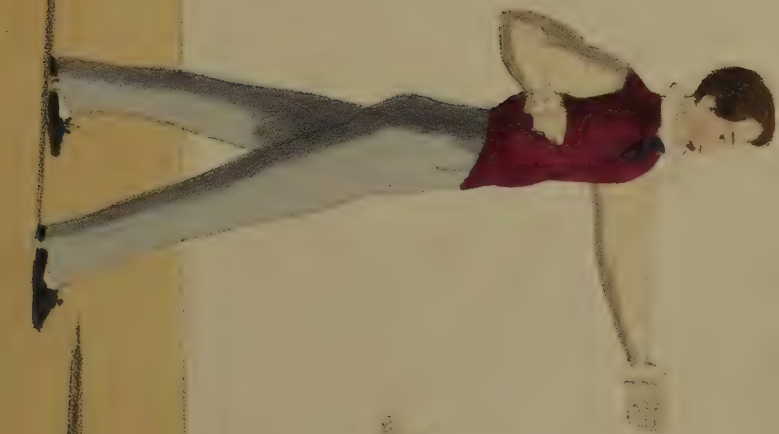


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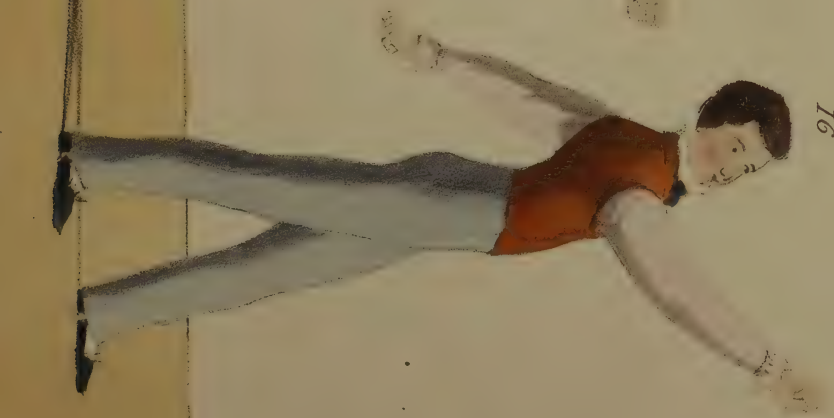


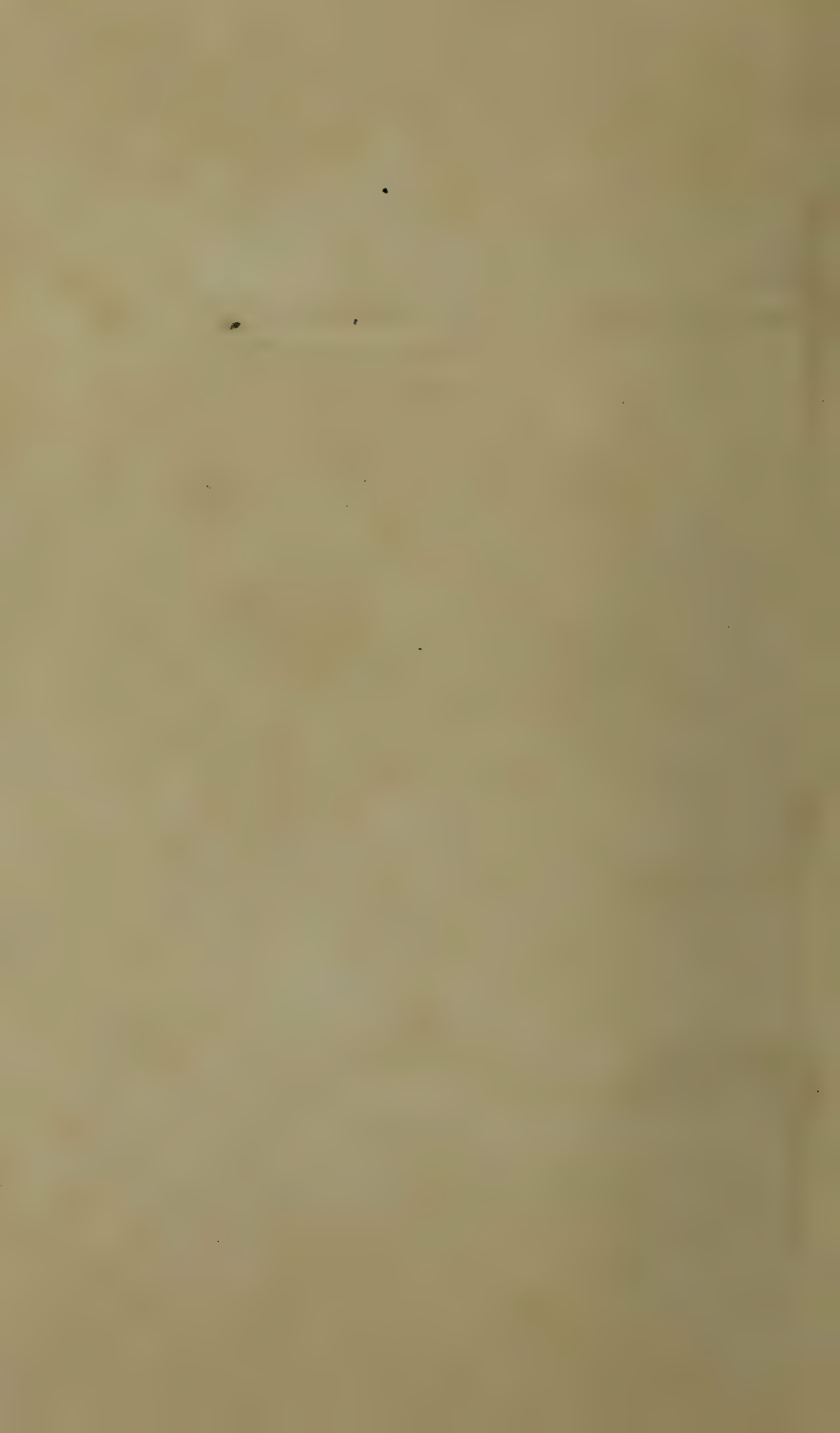


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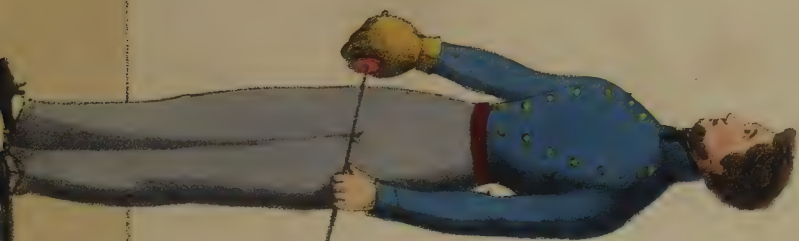


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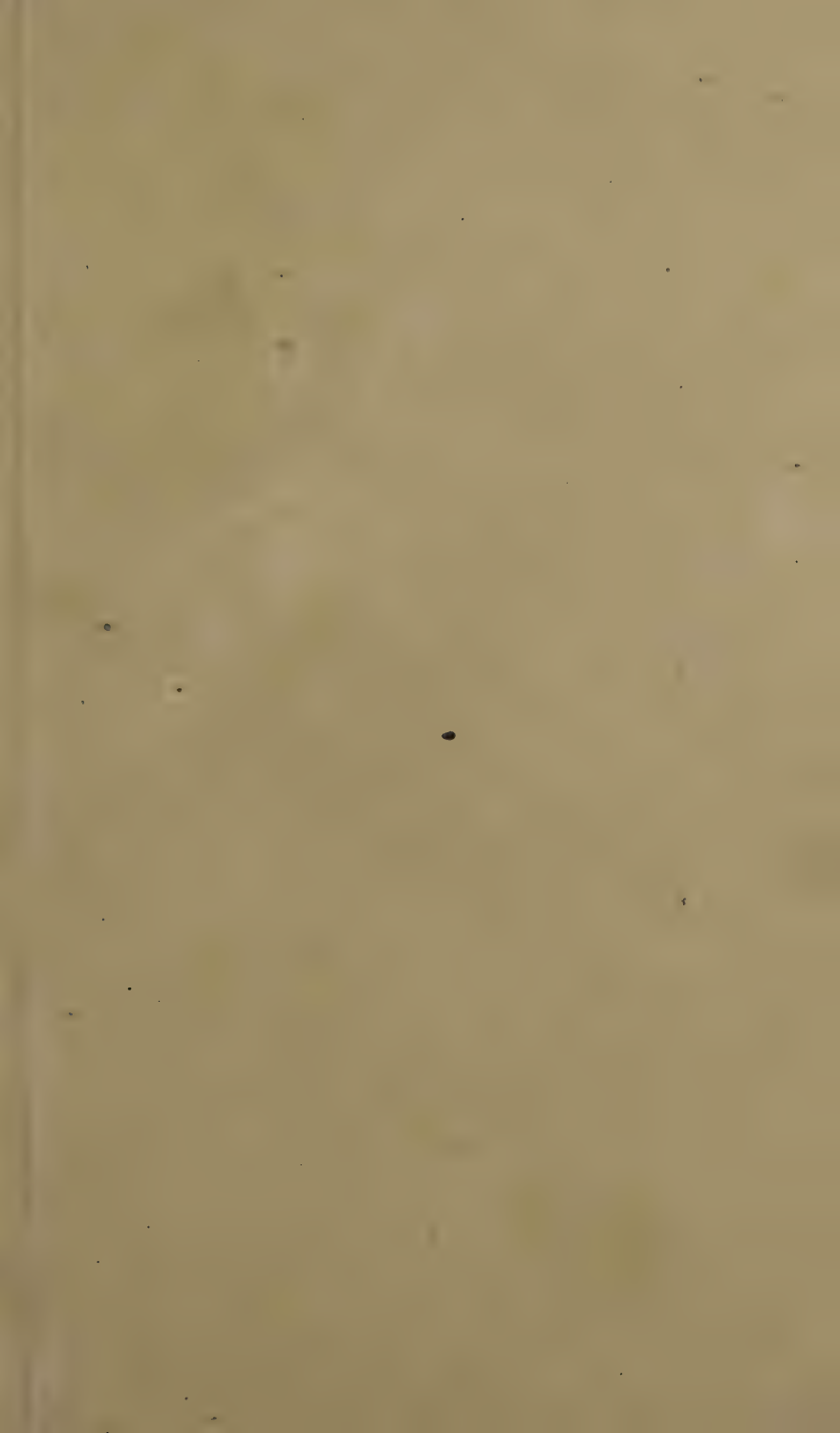


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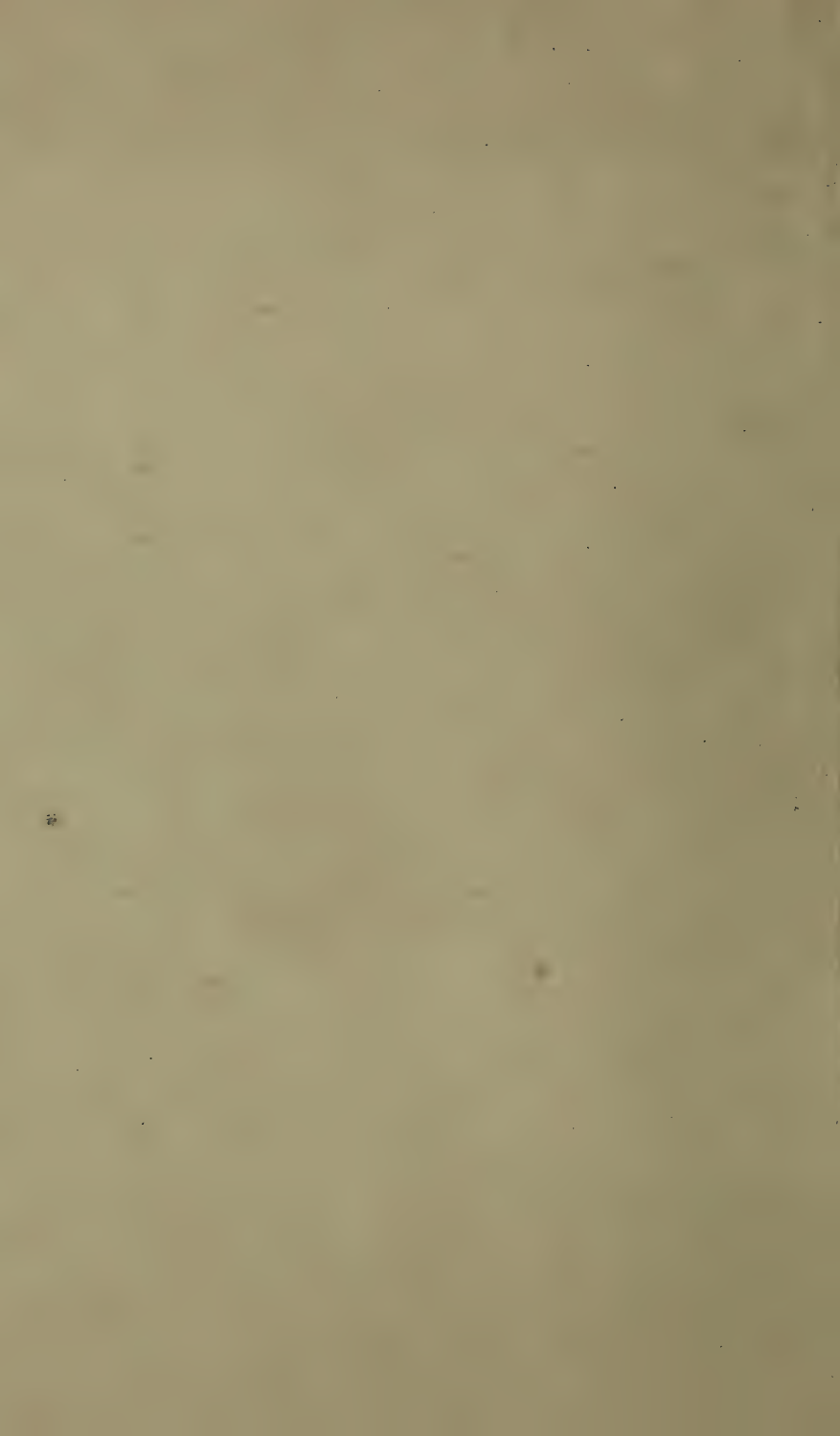












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35 "Nothing like leather"

